

A
Modest Plea
FOR THE
CLERGY;

WHEREIN
Is Briefly considered, the Original, Antiquity, and necessary use of the Clergy, and the pretended and real Occasions of their *Present Contempt*.

Honor Sacerdotii, firmamentum potentiae.

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T H E

CONTENTS.

CHAP.	Page
T <i>He Introduction.</i>	
I. <i>Of the Name and Original, &c. of the Clergy.</i>	5
II. <i>Of the Antiquity of the Clergy; a Rational account of, and Inquiry into the Institution, &c.</i>	9
III. <i>Out of what Rank and Condition the Clergy were elected among the Jews and Pagans; The Respect shewed them, &c.</i>	19
IV. <i>A brief account of the Institution of the Levitical Clergy.</i>	26
V. <i>Of the Institution of the Evangelical Clergy.</i>	33
VI. <i>Of the Spirit's Agency in respect of the Clergy, &c.</i>	39
VII. <i>Of the Incommunicableness of the Offices of the Clergy.</i>	45
VIII. <i>How the Clergy in all Ages have undergone Contempt; The Character of their Contemners, &c.</i>	
	IX. A

The CONTENTS.

CHAP.	Page
IX. <i>A Survey of the pretences of the Contempt of the Clergy. First, want of Example.</i>	65
X. <i>A Survey of the pretences of the Contempt of the Clergy. Secondly, Idleness.</i>	75
XI. <i>A View of the pretences of the Contempt of the Clergy. Thirdly, Pride.</i>	82
XII. <i>A Survey of the pretences of the Contempt of the Clergy. Fourthly, Covetousness.</i>	89
XIII. <i>A Survey of some of the Real Grounds of the Contempt of the Clergy.</i>	104
XIV. <i>A farther Examination of the Grounds of the Contempt of the Clergy, respecting their Condition in the World, and Extraction.</i>	115

T H E

INTRODUCTION.

IF there were not in man a natural desire to convey something of himself to Posterity, and that his Memory might survive his Ashes; we had never heard of the *Egyptians* expending their Treasures in Pyramids, nor of the *Greeks* and *Romans* bestowing their Wealth and Care in Statues, Monuments and Inscriptions. And this desire is so naturaliz'd into all Qualities of men, that even the poor *Statuary* express'd no less, when he so cunningly placed his Name in the *Image* of his God, that it might last as long as that Master-piece of his Art. And yet men are not more ambitious of Memory than Fame; as is clearly to be seen in those very persons, who though never so careless of a virtuous Conversation, are yet marvellous greedy of that Reputation which is its natural appendage.

Nor can this be any matter of our Admiration, when it is duly considered, That

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Reputation

Reputation goes further than Power ; and that men are serviceable, or otherwise, according to the Opinion which is had of their Persons. “ For, let two men (said “ that Oracle of the Chair and Pulpit) “ speak the same words, give the same “ advice, pursue the same business, drive “ the same design, with equal right, equal means, equal diligence, and every “ other thing equal ; yet commonly the “ success is strangely different, if the one “ be well thought of, and the other labour of an ill report. So that he loseth the chief advantage of his Cause, “ who loseth the good Opinion of his Person.

And though a good Opinion of mens Persons be of great moment in all ranks of men, yet in none can it be of greater, than in the *Clergy*. For if we take our measures from the things wherein they deal, the Credit of their Persons is very highly considerable ; because thereon, in a great measure depend the success and belief of their Office, and consequently the welfare of Religion ; which with no small numbers of men, hath just so much Belief, as its Ministers have Credit. And yet we see no Order of men, upon every slight and frivolous occasion, so scornfully exposed as the *Clergy* ; and that not
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seldome too for doing those very things, which with equal Esteemers, ought to be the matter of their Commendation and Reverence. For let Clergy-men, with a zeal and impartiality becoming their Function, press the due exercise of Holiness and Vertue, and the forsaking those courses of vicious and ungodly Living, wherewith so many are debauched; let them (following the method of the Gospel) teach us to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and our obligation to live soberly, righteously, and godly all the time of our being upon Earth; let Clergy-men (I say) conscientiously pursue these and the like Instances of their Office, and men commonly deal with them, as the *Greeks* dealt with their two Gods, *Hercules* and *Mercury*, when they worship't the one with reviling Speeches, and the other with casting Dirt and Stones at his Image.

Now, when with not a little resentment I seriously consider, that the Contempt of the Clergy is not the Russian and borish Humour only of the Rude and less-civilized, but even of many of those, who would be look'd upon as the *Great Lights* of Deportment, and the Refin'd and Philosophical Persons of the Age (moved with this Consideration) I be-

gan to stagger in my good Opinion of the Clergy, and to suspect there might be sufficient matter for the Tempest, especially when I saw it raised against them by persons of too much seeming Genteelness and Philosophy, to pour Contempt upon any without all just Cause or Pre-
tence.

And yet fearing to be seduced with popular Examples, and unwarily to imbibe a groundless prejudice against that *Order* of Men, for which I have ever retain'd so Singular a Reverence and Esteem, I thought it the most Christian and Manly method, not to take upon trust a thing of so great Importance; But by a plain and short research into the Circumstances of the Present Clergy, to try if any thing might be met with to justify that *Obloquy* and *Contempt* which is heapt upon them. And for a more methodical procedure, I have cast my *Thoughts* into the ensuing Chapters.

C H A P. I.

Of the Name, and Original, &c. of the Clergy.

AS NO Nation was ever yet read of, so infidel and profane, as to live without all belief of some Deity, and profession of some Religion; so there was never any Religion that had not *Separate Persons* to whom was committed the *Power* and *Care* of *prescribing, directing, and administering* the *Rites* thereof, and whom by easie Figure we may call their Clergy. For the Name coming of *Clerus* naturally signifying a Lot, Patrimony, or Heritage, may inoffensively be given both to the Jewish and Heathen Priests; who for their attendance upon Religion had their Subsistence and Imployment.

But in the first times of Christianity the word *Clergy* was solemnly adopted into the Family of Religious Titles, and made to denote the Church, (or whole Body of Believers) which being God's peculiar Inheritance, was called his *Clerus*, or Clergy. And this acception of the word is so well approved of by some Modern

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

Writers, that they with the Fathers had still continued it in its first Latitude, and that they had never appropriated that to the Ministry, as being but a part of the Communion, which primitively belong'd to the whole. And yet Master *Calvin*, who seems most offended at this restraint of the word, cannot deny its Antiquity; but confesses it to have been an ancient Mode of speaking, to call the whole Order of Ecclesiastical Ministers by the Name of Clergy.

But not to faunter away time in founding of Puddles, it sufficeth our present purpose to take notice, That those Provinces among the *Romans* over which they set Procurators, Prætors and Proconsuls, were styled *Cleri*. And that in allusion to this acception of the word, the Charge or Portion assigned by Lot to *Matthias*, whither, as most conceive, he was to go preach the Gospel, was called Κληρὸς Διακονίας καὶ Ἀποστολῆς, the Lot of Ministry and Apostleship. And the several places whither the Apostles went to plant the Gospel, were their Κληροί, or Provinces; which after they had converted them to the Faith, they were to instruct and govern. But in this Government they were caretully to avoid the Exaction and Covetousness notorious in the *Roman* Prætors,

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

7

Prætors, who minded nothing but to gripe and squeeze wealth out of the people, therewith to enrich themselves: But on the contrary to take care of their Provinces, as Shepherds of their Flocks, using such moderation and clemency as might move the people to obey them, not of constraint, but with a *willing mind*. And in imitation of these Κληροι of the Apostles, some have conjectured that their Successors had Provinces allotted to their Government and Instruction; and that from the same *Cleri*, the persons who taught and ruled them, derived the appellation of *Clergy*. There is indeed a *Learned Writer*, who by no means can be induced to admit of these *Cleri* or Provinces, but with many probabilities has labour'd to refute them, in the Sixth Chapter of his *Irenicum*. But whether Κληρ & Ἀποστολῆς doth signifie the *Office*, or *Province* of Apostleship, doth not at all concern our present purpose, seeing that either of the two is enough to occasion the Name we speak of.

But besides this *Roman* account of the word, we have another from the *Hebrews*; Among whom that which we render Κληροι, signified those Portions which fell by Lot to any in the division of an Estate or Country. Thus in the Division of *Ca-*

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

naan, when the Patriarchs received their Κληροι, or portions in Land, God appointed none unto *Levi*, but made himself his Lot and Possession. And when the whole World was divided into *Hebrew* and *Pagan*, God chusing the former to profess his Worship, he made them his Κληρο, or people of his inheritance, *Deut.* 4. 20. And those of the *Jews* who believed the Gospel, are, according to St. *Peter's* intimation, God's Lot, of whom he took possession, as of a Patrimony assigned to his most holy Service. And after this also, such among the Believing *Jews* as were ordain'd for the Ministry, were by way of Eminence called the Κληρο, or Clergy of God. Because when they were admitted to Holy Orders, they were set apart and devoted to his *Solemn Worship*, and thereby became his more peculiar Portion. Like those whom God, in *Numb.* 16. separated from the Congregation, to bring them near to himself, to the service of the *Tabernacle of the Lord*, and to stand before the Congregation, to Minister unto them.

And any of these notices of the word which have been already mention'd, I take for a clearer occasion of its application to the Ministry, than that of *David's* distribution of the Priests into several Courses. Which hapned upon the death
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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

9

of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, when there remain'd no more Sons to *Aaron* but *Eleazar* and *Ithamar*, In whose two Families the succession of the Priests was preserved. At which time *David*, according to the number of people in each Family, made his Division. Now this Distribution being made *Κληρω*, or by *Lot*, some have thought that all those have from thence been called *Clergy*, whose Office was to *Minister* in Holy Things.

But whatever was the occasion of the Title of *Clergy*, its first application to the Ecclesiastique Ministry was Significant and Laudable, not to say Sacred and Divine, and such as even Malice it self can make no Topick to traduce, or contemn those that bear it.

C H A P. II.

Of the Antiquity of the Clergy: A rational account of, and inquiry into the Institution, &c.

HAVING consider'd the native signification of the word, which according to *Epictetus* is *the beginning of knowledge*; the next thing by the proposed Method to be examined, is the Antiquity of the Clergy; which is so clear that
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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

it may seem meer trifling to attempt its demonstration. For indeed the Antiquity of the Clergy is to be placed among those Verities, which are more manifest and known of themselves, than by all can be alledged for their Manifestation. And therefore whosoever shall deny a matter of such evidence and universal acknowledgment, as that now spoken of, he ought to be reckon'd for a meer Sceptick Wrangler, unworthy of confutation, and as an enemy to the common sentiments of all Mankind, and the impressions of Universal Nature and Religion, by whom the antiquity of the Clergy, or Priest-hood can be disbelieved, or denied.

But yet when we seriously consider the unhappy *genius* of the Age wherein we live, and that it is our hard lot to fall into those *perillous times* wherein not only some inferiour Points, but the whole frame of Religion is ready to be brought in *question*, and to be thought no more than a meer Engine of Government; we can scarce hope, upon this sad reflection, that the order, and Institution of the Clergy should meet with any higher esteem. And, I hope, it will not be deem'd meer Melancholy to imagine, That there is a race of men who will not be coy and squeamish to make
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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

II

the *Calling* of the Clergy, as well as the Belief of a God, to be wholly grounded upon some blind Tradition, set on foot by some crafty Politician ; who by the Doctrine of *Obedience* and *Submission*, daily inculcated by this *Order of Men*, might be the better able to awe a silly sheepish World ; and to render it more tractable to his purposes.

But such as are so far taken with this fine Conceit, as to think that the Institution of the Clergy is nothing but a blind Tradition invented by some cunning States-man, I would have them to answer me without doubling, who was the Author of this Tradition ? When did it commence ? How came these men to be so wise as to discover and know that which for so many years already past, none was able to find out ? What was there to guide and instruct the World before this blind Tradition ? Who set this Tradition first on foot ? and before it was set on foot, was there no Clergy, or were they unnecessary ? At what Period became the Clergy useful ? and why then and not before ? But when the cunning States-man invented this Tradition, by what means did he induce men to believe him ; and that too in a case which was clear contrary to their former judgment, and to the judgment of all the Generations

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

nerations that ever went before them? Did he compel them to it by force, and gain the day by dint of Sword? then where is the Story of his Atchievements? what Monuments preserve the memory of his Battles and Victories? where and in what *Ara* did this *Mighty man* live, who did thus over-awe the World?

But if the Politician moved men by Reason to believe him, we must needs grant the Reasons to have been wonderfully clear and weighty, that could persuade the whole World to come off from their old Opinion, and so far to part with their Liberty, as to set over them an Order of Men, whom they knew from the design and tenour of their Function, would fill their minds with fear and awe, and put a curb upon their carnal Wills, restrain their darling Lusts, bound their worldly Interests, obstruct the stream of their Natural Inclinations, and at once abridge them of all their wonted Licentiousness. But if the Politician did first move men to receive this Order of Men meerly upon the account of the reasonableness of the Institution, then is this ground enough both to acknowledge and respect the Function. But what did the States-man design in setting afoot such an Institution? Had he any regard therein unto the good
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of the World? Did he convince Mankind that a Clergy was truly necessary to the Solemnity of Holy Rites, preservation of Religion, and to the promotion of the Peace and Welfare of Government among men? If so, then tell me, did he say the truth, or did he lye? If he said truth, then we ought to believe him, and consequently to assert the Clergy upon the account of Truth: If he told a lye, then is it for the good of the whole World to believe a lye. For if it be a lye to say, That the Institution of the Clergy is nothing else but a blind Tradition, set on foot by some crafty States-man, on purpose to awe the World by their Ministry, and to keep it Honest and Peaceable, Obedient and Submissive, then is a Lye the foundation of all these Felicities. Or if it be true to say thus, yet we are still to reverence the Clergy, because they are the Channel conveying so many benefits to the World, &c. But to proceed.

That the foundation of all Religion consists in the belief of a God, is so universal an Article, that even those Persons and Nations who differ most from one another, and that too in no ordinary points of Religion, do unanimously accord in this, That there is a God, whom we are bound to labour to please and honour,
and

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

and to fear to offend and provoke, out of a hope to be made happy by him. And as to those who have opposed the Belief of a God, they have been so very few, and commonly so vitious, to so vile a degree that the World hath been greatly weary of them, and thought them of so little Credit, that they could never persuade it, that they were in earnest; But that their wicked lives tempted them rather to wish that there were no God, than that any reason did convince them to believe so. And as the best and wisest of men have agreed in the *belief* of a God, and that that Belief is the foundation of all Religion; so they have likewise acknowledged, That Religion was to be expressed in the solemn worship of that God, whom they believed. And to the end that this Worship might be truly *Solemn*, they likewise held, That it was to be publicly celebrated in *appointed places, at set times, in prescript forms, and by select persons*. And we find this last circumstance so universally observed by all Nations moderately civilized, that it may seem to be founded in the Law of Nature, and to have had none other but God for its Author. Or, if this were otherwise, how should it come to pass that it is almost as easie to find a people without *Souls*, as without some sort of
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of Religion; or to find any sort of Religion without reference to a God; or either Religion, or a God, without a Clergy or Separate Persons to Negotiate the *Holy Ceremonies*? And not to meddle at present with the *Divine Appointment of Certain Men* for the administration and defence of Religion; we will conceive upon what grounds men herein, left unto their own *reason*, might be induced to erect a Clergy, or to constitute an Order of men to appoint and perform the publick Solemnities of Religion, and to direct and determine in emergent Cases.

And we may imagine that the first motive hereunto was a mature deliberation of the natural importance and design of Religion it self; which was clearly seen to bind men to a Solemn and Regular Worship of the Deity. Now this Worship (they saw) could neither be Regular nor Solemn, if there were not select persons to make it so; for things cease to be both, when they become Common; and they must needs become Common, when vulgarly mixt and transacted with profane, that is, Common Utensils. And what is not the least considerable, those things are in great likelihood not to be done at all, or with no just decorum, which are left arbitrary for any one to do. They consider'd likewise the manifold indispositions

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

dispositions usually accompanying the generality of Mankind, whereby they were render'd very incompetent to handle things Sacred, according to the dignity of their Nature, and intent of their Institution. They saw all, That Holy matters were to be kept within a *Sept*, the more decently to secure them from being unhallowed by the rude and undiscerning touch of the Vulgar. For the Holy Offices of Religion are at the same time profan'd that they are made Common; which they cannot escape, if there be no distinction of Persons observ'd in their Administration. Men in this affair might likewise argue from a Parity of Reason; and that if it be for the credit and advancement of all profitable *Arts* and *Professions* to be provided of such *Professors*, *Officers* and *Masters* as may propagate, instruct, and execute the same; then the like must be granted to Religion, or else we must think it to be of less worth and moment than Secular Professions, and that less is required to make a man Religious, than a Pin-maker, and to give him a competent knowledge of the things of God, than of making of a *Horse-shoe*.

Nor doth it here amount to any valuable Objection, that the common right and interest, which every one hath in Religion,

on, is sufficient to entitle them to the publick officiating the Solemn Rites thereof; for by the same reason every one might gird on the Sword of Justice, and become a Publick Minister of the Laws, on pretence of the Common Interest which he hath therein; the consequences of which *Hypothesis* are so absurd and monstrous, that they carry with them their own confutation.

But that which we may presume to have been most moving in this concern, was the Consideration of the Common Nature of Mankind; which being far gone in corruptions, is utterly unfit for, and unprovided of that Sanctity which is required in Religious Addresses: upon which consideration it was deem'd not only safe and agreeable, but also necessary for this fallen condition of men, that out of themselves some persons should be chosen, and by Holy Ceremonies set apart, and as it were *placed in a middle Station between God and the People*, on purpose to present God with the Peoples Petitions, and to bring down his Blessings upon them. And though the bestowing of God's Blessings depends upon his own free act, and that the acceptance of such Petitions as are made by such Persons in be-

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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

half of the people, is to be known by such Testimonies as God is pleased to vouchsafe ; yet that there is a necessity of such persons, who by *Holy Offices* are thus to *mediate* for the people, is a thing God himself was pleased to illustrate by an everlasting Example, when he sent his Son to take our Nature, that he might be qualified to interceed for that Nature which he had taken, and be fit to make nearer accesses unto that Seat of Mercy, which we by reason of our great imperfections, were unfit to approach. And in this sense he is styled, the *only* Mediator between God and Man.

And I humbly conceive it was with respect unto this Consideration, that at the designing of Persons for the Clergy, the Greek Church made this Prayer, *Κύριε ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν*, &c. “ O Lord our
 “ God, who because Man’s Nature is not
 “ able of it self to approach the Glorious
 “ Essence of thy Godhead, hast in thy
 “ wise Providence and Dispensation or-
 “ der’d us Masters and Teachers of *like*
 “ Passions with our selves ; whom thou
 “ hast placed in thy Throne (or in the
 “ Ministry of thy Kingdom, the Gospel)
 “ *εἰς τὸ ἀναφέρειν σοι Θυσίαν*, &c. to offer
 “ unto thee a Sacrifice in behalf of the
 “ people, &c. The contexture and occa-
 sion of which Solemn prayer I take for no in-
 competent

competent account of appointing men for the Clergy.

But not to enquire too minutely for the Reasons that at first might probably induce Mankind to constitute peculiar persons for the Service of Religion, we may conceive that all herein did not follow the same *Light*. But that some Nations were hereunto persuaded by the more durable and regular principle of Reason: Others, by an Universal Tradition, which will last as long as either we reverence our Ancestors, or think not our selves wiser than all that lived before us. Others no doubt, imitated herein some Nation, which they esteemed wise, sober, and disinterested. But without any peremptory determination of the Motive, we are most certain of the thing, and that ever since the Creation a *Deity, Religion, and Priesthood*, do as mutually infer each other, as the most *natural Relations*.

C H A P. III.

Out of what Rank and Condition the Clergy were elected, among the Jews and Pagans: The Respect shewn them, &c.

HAVING thus briefly surmised some of the more probable inducements for

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

the Institution of a Clergy ; we come next to examine what manner of persons were usually made choice of for that Office ; and what respect was given them, when they were once therewith invested. And limiting this Remark to the Times antecedent to our Saviour's *coming in the flesh*, we know that all Religion was then either of *Jew* or *Gentile*. And beginning with the *Gentiles*, we read how the Sons of their Princes were educated for the *Priesthood*: That their Kings did exercise this Office: That in their Sacrifices there was among the *Romans* a peculiar Office assigned unto the King. And we find that when *Numa*, to give more Splendour and Credit to Religion, established many sorts of *Priests* in the *City*, fearing that in process of time the Kings might come to neglect their Office about the Sacrifices, by reason of the weighty affairs of State, that might otherwise imploy them ; he ordain'd the *Flamines* to supply the King's place, who bore the names of the several Gods, to whom they were consecrate. And this officiating of their Kings was thought so necessary, that when they were banish'd *Rome*, one of the *Priestly* Order had the *Name* of King while he was doing his Function, lest the People should suspect any thing to be lacking in the worship of the Gods. Thus they

they preserved Royalty in Religion, when it was cast out of the State; and how unwelcome soever it became among the uncertain people, yet they thought it necessary to be preserved in the Priesthood, which was generally so highly valued by the *Romans*, that it was accounted a singular honour in their Genealogies, *that some* of their Family had been *Priests*. And of this Truth we meet with a pregnant instance in *Agrippa*, who writing to *Caius Caesar*, and speaking of the Honour of his own Descent, he told the Emperor, that some of his Ancestors had not only been Kings, *but also* admitted to the Priesthood. We find likewise that a sort of Priests among the *Romans*, called *Augurs*, were chosen out of the *Patricii*, who were the Nobility of *Rome*.

But suppose the Families out of which the *Gentile Clergy* were elected, had been as mean as they were certainly otherwise, yet to those who were once received unto that Province, they were careful to pay an esteem and reverence suitable to the Sacredness of their employment; and to instate them with such Immunities as testified they thought them not fit to be treated as the *Vulgus*. Rationally concluding,
That those whom they made choice of for the
C 3 *Service*

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

Service of Religion, were to be raised above the common condition of Men, and to be freed from the Cares and Incumbrances of the World. And it will not be here greatly impertinent to observe, that the *white Vestments* of the Heathen Priests attested their Separation from the *Vility* of the *Many*: And, and that their mitres, and Bonnets and other Ensigns of their Office, were also known Symbols of Authority and Honour. And yet in further testimony of the respect the Gentiles bore their Priests, there was none, no not in time of War, that durst offer them the least violence or abuse. Insomuch that it was gon into a *proverbial phrase* for a barbarous and unnatural War, that it spared not the Priests, but violated those very *persons* that carried the Holy Fire before the Army. *Tacitus* somewhere speaking of the Priests, tells us *that* “they were not molested with the
“Scorns of vitious and ill-bred persons, but
“by certain Canons and Laws were secured from all *outrage and disrespect*.”

And if any thing be yet needful for a further illustration of the Gentiles carriage in this matter, it is summ'd up by *Cicero* in the Case of the Roman *Augurs*: “The right of the *Augurs*, saith
“he, joyn'd with Authority, is the most
excellent

“ excellent it the Commonwealth. And
“ this I say, not because I my self am an
“ *Augur*, but because it is just and neces-
“ sary so to speak. For if we enquire for
“ their Authority, *what* can be greater
“ than to convene and dissolve the pub-
“ lick Assemblies, and appoint the So-
“ lemnities of Religion ! *What* more
“ magnificent than to have power to de-
“ cree when the Consuls are fit or unfit
“ to hold the Magistracy ! *What* can be
“ more religious than to give Institutes
“ to the people ! And yet *Cicero* expres-
ly affirms all these things to have been
in the power of the *Augurs*, *Lib. 2. de*
Legib.

Nor are we to look upon the *Romans*
to have affected Singularity in this parti-
cular ; for we find the *Persians*, *Egyptians*,
and the great *Lights* of the Gentile World,
the *Athenians*, to have equall'd, or rather
surpass'd the *Romans*, in the veneration
of their Priests, whom they made the
Guides and Counsellors of their *Kings*,
and *Judges* and Dividers in Secular Af-
fairs. It were easie to be numerous in
Examples to this purpose, and by an In-
duction of all the Nations in the World
to prove this Reverence of the *Clergy*,
whom we read in many Nations to have
lived apart from other men, and to have

had their *Adyta*, or *Secret Places*, as well as their Gods; the solitary Groves where they abode, signalizing the *separateness* of their Function.

But if all this should be charged upon the Ignorance and Superstition of the Heathen World, and therefore no more fit to be imitated than their *Polytheism* and *Idolatry*; It will then import us in the next place to consider, what in this case was the practice of the *Jews*, God's own People, whom we cannot suspect of Ignorance of Imposture, being herein plainly guided and instructed of God. And first it is observable that among the *Jews*, the designation of persons for the Guidance of Religion, was much more ancient than a Levitical Institution, being practised by them from the Beginning. For they had Priests before *Aaron*, *Exod. xix. 22.* And when Families made Churches as well as Kingdoms, to be a Priest of the Most High God, or to officiate the Matters of Religion was the *Hereditary Honour*, and *Peculiar Prerogative* of the First-born, or Chief of the Family. For the selling of which Privilege *Esau* purchased the odious Title of *Profane*. And when the *Jews* were blessed with a settled Priesthood, they paid it all imaginable respect; beginning and determining all their publick Transactions

Transactions at the Word and *Decree* of their *Priests*, making the Honour of that *Office*, the Strength of their Arms, calling it a *Celestial Dignity*, a *Heavenly* and no *Earthly Inheritance*. And the Testimonies of what I now speak, are so many and known, that both the number and plainness will excuse the prosecution.

Nor were the ancient *Jews* more careful in their respect, than in the choice of their *Priests*; for we read in the *Sacred Story* of one of their Kings, that it was reckon'd in him for a great sin, that he made *Priests* of the lowest of the people, which were not of the Sons of *Levi*. He consecrated whosoever had a mind, without bearing any respect either to *Probity* of *Manners*, or *Honesty* of *Descent*; and that passing by the Line of *Levi*, he took those who had neither Right nor Title to the Priesthood. And what was yet more wicked, some are of opinion that he was guilty of what the Canon Law now calls *Simony*, by selling the *Offices* of the Priest to those, who would give most for them.

And having thus briefly intimated the practice of both the ancient *Jews* and *Gentiles*, in relation to their Choice and Reverence of their Clergy; If we should now draw down the Enquiry to the modern

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

dern and present State of the World; we shall find no Nation so savage and uncivilized, as not to have some Officers of Religion, whom they treat with Civility, and make considerable in the Interest of their State and Government. The present *Jews* and *Mahumetans* would furnish us with *Store* of Matter to this purpose, if it were not already (*in two late Treatises concerning them*) done to our hands.

Now, what has been said will enforce us to one of these Conclusions; Either that the Rites of Christian Religion are more cheap, ordinary and common than those of the *Jews* and *Pagans*; Or those *Separate Persons* appointed to celebrate those *Rites* must have our Esteem and Reverence. To say that Christian Religion is not the most Divine Mystery that ever came into the World, and that all the parts thereof are in themselves the most excellent and sublime, and to Men the most beneficial and agreeable, that ever were made known upon Earth, *is as false as its greatest Adversary, the Father of Lyes*. And not to render due regard unto those who are known to be the true Ministers of Christian Religion, is either to think them less worthy than the Pagans thought the Ministers of their idolatrous Ceremonies;
or

or to shew our selves less Civil, than the greatest Barbarians.

C H A P. IV.

A brief account of the Institution of the Levitical Clergy.

THere is nothing more material in the Circumstances of Religion, than that men should be ascertain'd that their Spiritual Guides have their Commission and Calling from God; because a doubting thereof must unavoidably prove no small prejudice to their Authority and Success. And upon this Consideration it will be necessary to enquire into the first Institution of the Clergy, to the end that if we find it to be no less Divine, than we have found it to be Rational, the Sacred Honour of its Original might be sufficient to justify and assert it against all contempt.

And looking back to the first Dispensations of Religion, we find the Priesthood to have been ambulatory, and the Holy Offices consign'd to the First-born, or *Chief* of each Family. For the Priesthood
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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

did not begin in *Aaron*, but was translated and conferr'd upon his Family before his Consecration. For those young men of the Children of *Israel*, which offered Burnt-offerings, and sacrificed Peace-offerings of Oxen unto the Lord (*Exod. 24. 5.*) as they were Priests, so without question they were no other than the *First-born* to whom the Priesthood did belong. But as soon as God began to constitute a *Church*, he began also to fix the *Priesthood*, and appointed *Aaron* to minister the Publick Services. And during the *Levitical Dispensation* the Succession of the Priesthood was continued in *Aaron's* Posterity, and the High-Priesthood tied to the Line of his First-born, the rest of his Posterity being simply termed Priests, or Priests of the *Second Order*.

Now, what is here chiefly to be taken notice of, is *Aaron's Call* to the *Priesthood*, which we are assured was from God. So that neither *Aaron* did at first, nor any after him could legally, take this Honour to himself: But all were called of God. And this Truth we find miraculously attested in the suddain and fearful destruction of those who undervalued the Priests, and factiously usurp'd their Office. 'Tis true *Aaron's Priesthood* was but temporary,

rary, and at the appointed Season to expire and determine ; yet as long as it did continue, it was lawful for none but those of his *Line* to undertake it ; Because God had so ordain'd. And this Divine Ordinance of the Priesthood was such an inviolable observation, that even Christ, when he came to give himself an Offering and a Sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling Saviour, and by the Oblation of his own Body made an Atonement for our Sins ; when Christ, I say, became an Aaronical Priest, and put an end to that sort of Priesthood ; when he also became a Priest according to the Order of *Melchizedeck*, which lasts for ever ; both were by Divine Appointment, as the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* distinctly argues out of the *Second*, and the *Hundred and Tenth Psalms*. But here it is worthy our remark, that Jesus was anointed with the Unction of *Aaron* to the *Sacerdotal Office*, though not called after the Order of *Aaron* ; for it is evident that our Lord sprang out of *Judah*, of which Tribe Moses spake nothing concerning Priesthood, (*Heb. 7. 14.*) or, that no Priest should come of that Tribe. But Jesus was made a Priest after a more ancient Order, according to the Prediction of the *Psalmist*, *The Lord hath sworn*
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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchizedeck. But though he were of another Order, yet whatsoever *Aaron* did as a Priest, was wholly Typical, and to be fulfilled in the *Messias*, as he was a Priest. To which he hath a double Title, the one of Primogeniture, as the First-begotten of God; the other of Unction, as being anointed unto that Office.

Now, if Christ did not glorifie himself to become an High-Priest; if as Man, he did not advance himself to that Dignity, but was thereunto advanced by God; then is the *Priesthood* an Office to whose undertaking, more is required than personal Abilities, and which none of *right* can undertake, but either by God's immediate or mediate Call. For though the meetness of the Person ought to be looked upon by Men, yet we cannot prescribe unto God, or tell him who are fit to be heard by him in behalf of the People, or whom he ought to entertain in Religious Addresses. Nor are we able to yield a reason from the nature of the thing, why God should accept of *Aaron* more than of *Abiram*, or the *Mediation* of any one man for many, except the free pleasure of him that makes the choice. But to return: If the more solemn Institution of the Clergy
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bear date only from the Consecration of *Aaron*, yet it plainly appears to be Divine, or of God's own appointment; and during the time of the Mosaical Oeconomy, was so Sacred and Inviolable, that none could invade it under a gentler Penance than *Sudden death*, or a *Leprosie*. And long before this too, I mean before the erecting of the Tabernacle or Temple, and Institution of Priesthood, when God was served within Private Walls, and the Right of Priest-hood in every Family was annexed to the Primogeniture, so that the First-born was *Priest*; we read *but of one*, contrary to custom, who aspired unto it, whose Ambition therein would have been utterly inexcusable, if the whole disposal of the matter had not been from God, who loved *Jacob*, but hated *Esau*, and made the Elder to serve the Younger, *Rom. 9. 12, 13*. But though the Levitical or Aaronical Priesthood was of Divine Institution, yet being wholly Typical, and consequently to determine, and because it is already past and gon; we are next to enquire into the Nature and Constitution of that Clergy which succeeded it.

C H A P. V.

Of the Institution of the Evangelical Clergy.

WHen the Great Fulfiller of the Law, (even the blessed Author of our most Holy Faith) in a most excellent manner made good that Title ; and being drawing to the last Stage of his life, and together with it to put a full end to the *Mosaick Dispensation*, and abolish both the Sacrifice and Priesthood in that of himself: When (without a Figure) the immutable Clergy of the *Gospel* was to succeed into the mutable Clergy of the *Law*; he called those Apostles, of whom at first he made choice, and gave them *Power* to erect and constitute a *Church*, and to transmit such Powers unto others as were proper for the continuance and propagation of the same. Now, the Commission which Christ gave to the Apostles to empower them to this end, is the chief thing to be considered; and we meet with it at large, as it was signed by our Saviour immediately upon his Ascension, in *S. Matth. 28.*

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

33

18. *All power is given unto me in Heaven and Earth.*

19. *Go ye therefore and teach (or, make) all Nations (Disciples,) baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

20. *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World.*

In which words Christ first asserts and declares his own Commission; shewing his Apostles that what he did, was not the result of his own private Judgment, but the exercise of that Authority which was given him of his Father; who had consign'd unto him a full Power of ordering and disposing whatsoever belong'd to the Church, of which he was made the Prince and Head upon his rising from the dead; and by vertue of that relation stood obliged to provide for the preservation and encrease thereof. But how this should be done, is the doubt to be satisfied. For Christ in his own Person could not make this provision for the Church, *because as to his humane Nature, he was shortly to remove to Heaven, and there to abide until his coming to judge the quick and dead.* Now whatever a man

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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

cannot do in his own person, must be done by deputation, if it be done at all. And therefore Christ by his Ascension being become incapable in his own Person to take this care of the Church, he deputed his Apostles *missioners* thereunto, appointing them in his Name and Steat to perform all those Offices, which were required to the Establishing and Advancement of the Gospel. Giving them also power to depute others to succed them in the same Care, and to deliver down the same Power, successively to the end of the World. And to the end that the Clergy might not be thought to expire in the Persons of the Apostles, nor they to have died without Successors in the Ministry, Christ promised upon his *Departure*, *to be with them unto the End of the World.* Which words *we will take for granted to have been spoken to the Apostles as, they were the cheifs of the Clergy, or Ministers of the Gospel; next under Christ and that they were not limited exclusively to their Persons, but in them did belong their successors of the Apostolick Order.* For however the Apostles might be with Christ, he could not be personally with them, so much as unto their death, *much less unto the end of the World,* being so shortly upon the
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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

35

peech of these words, to ascend up into Heaven ; whereof they themselves were *Undeniable Witnesses.*

It is likewise duly to be considered: That Christ by his promise [*lo, I am with you alway, even unto the End of the World*] intended some benefits to the Church, which should be of no less continuance than the Church it self, and that the Apostles were to be the first and cheif Dispensers of those benefits. And if it be demanded what these benefits were ? it may (from the Text) be safely replied, that they were the several Functions of the Clergy, to which the Apostles were Commission'd ; *viz.* Preaching, Baptising, Administration of the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, the exercise of the Censures, &c. All which were to end with the Apostles, or they were not : If they were to end with the Apostles, then has the Church ever since the death of the Apostles been without these Offices, which amounts to no less than that there has been no Church since their Decease. Or, if they were not to end with the Apostles, but have always been, and are still to be exercised, unto the end of the World ; then it cannot be denied but there ever have been, and ever must be fit Persons, who like

the Apostles must have a just power to dispense these Benefits, or exercise these Offices. For no less can be conceived to have been intended by Christ in his promise of being with the Apostles *always, Even unto the End of the World.* And we shall have no temptation to suspect this Interpretation of the *Promise*, when we shall consider, first, that by the *End of the World*, “*That State* of affairs is to “be understood, which began exactly at “Christ’s Resurrection; when all Pow- “er was given him in Heaven and Earth; “which was to continue to the end of “the World, or his coming to Judgment. Next, that the promise made unto the Apostles had respect unto this *State*; and therefore the Benefits promised, namely, *Preaching, Baptising, &c.* were to endure unto the full determination of the same.

Thirdly, That seeing Christ could not possibly be with the Apostles personally, nor they upon Earth, *Unto the End of the World*: There must be some other way to verifie Christ’s presence with the Apostles, and their being in the World unto the End thereof; both which seem to be implied in the Text. As to Christ’s presence with the Apostles, it is unanimously concluded of the *Vicaria presentia*

Spiritus,

Spiritus, in *Tertullian's* phrase, or of making the Holy Ghost his *Vicar*, in sending him to be with the Apostles upon his Ascension into Heaven. Which mission of the *Spirit* cannot be meant only of that which hapned at *Pentecost*, when he sat upon them in bodily Appearance, and inspired them with such extraordinary Gifts as were needful for those first times of the Gospel; such as the Gift of Tongues to enable them to Preach to all Nations in their own Language, and of others Miracles, to confirm the truth of their Doctrine, and to move men to believe it. For if the promise of Christ's being alway with the Apostles, were to be understood only of this Mission of the Spirit upon them, then it would follow, that Christ were still to be thus present with the Church, and that extraordinary Gifts did still continue, or that he who promised, were not faithful. And therefore it is necessary that we understand Christ's being with the Apostles, of his giving them the Holy Ghost to instate them with Power, not only in their own Persons to plant and govern the Church, and to perform all the Offices of the Clergy relating thereunto; but also to ordain others unto the same Functions, and to give them Authority to do the like *Unto the End of the World.*

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

So that by this promise made of his presence with the Apostles, Christ provided for a successive Clergy, in whom the Apostles were to continue, or the Ordinary Ministry be preserved unto the Consummation of all things.

And we have no reason to be jealous of this sense of our Saviour's Words, when we find it universally agreed upon, that one great end of sending the Holy Ghost to the Church, was the sanctifying and setting apart of Persons for the *Work* of the Clergy, and to convey a standing Authority of Ordination of meet persons to *mediate between God and the People*; to pray for and bless them in the Name of Christ; to help their Infirmities by composing for them a *Liturgy* according to the Pattern of the Apostles, of whose *Liturgy* several passages do yet remain. And the Holy Ghost doth still impower the Church to Ordain and Consecrate Persons for the Ministerial Office, for the Edifying of the Body of Christ. Who when ordain'd, are bound to take heed to themselves and unto all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made them *Overseers*, to feed the Church of God.

CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

*Of the Spirit's Agency in respect of the
Clergy, &c.*

HAVING endeavour'd to demonstrate that the true sense of Christ's promises, *In being with the Apostles*, doth respect that Authority which the Holy Ghost gave them, for appointing a settled Ministry in the Church, while militant upon Earth; In subserviency to our present purpose it may not be unuseful to observe, That among all those Offices which the Holy Ghost performs for the Church, there is none wherein he seems to be more interess'd, or to have a greater agency, than in the qualifying and separation of Persons for the Priesthood. Which work indeed is so peculiar to the Spirit, and so necessary for this purpose, that even the Great Pastor and Bishop of Souls became not a Preacher of his own Gospel, till he was thereunto Anointed and Consecrated by the Holy Ghost, *Luke 4. 18*. And when the same Great Bishop Ordain'd his Apostles, to be Bishops under him it was according to the tenor of his own Ordination, *As*

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

my Father sent me, so send I you ; and to shew wherein the Similitude consisted, he breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost, John 20. 21, 22. Which clearly implies, that as at his Mission from his Father to his Office, he was Anointed, or Consecrated by the Holy Ghost, which visibly descended upon him at his Baptism, when he entred upon his Ministry : So when the Apostles had their Mission from Christ, and were to enter upon their Ministry, they also were Consecrated by the Holy Ghost. Which they received not on'y to gift, and inable their Persons, but also to impower them for their Office ; as is undeniably evident upon the account of the words immediately following [Receive ye the Holy Ghost] which actually instate upon them the Power of the Keys.

'Tis true, after they had thus received the Holy Ghost, and were Commission'd to all the Offices of the Clergy, the Apostles were not immediately to fall upon their Execution, but were bid to stay at *Hierusalem*, till they should receive such Miraculous Gifts, by the visible descent of the Spirit, as should render their entrance upon the Ministry more solemn and remarkable, and their performance thereof

thereof more efficacious and convincing: That men seeing the *Wonders* done by the Apostles, none might have the least occasion to doubt of the truth of their Doctrin, or their Authority to Preach it.

But not only in Christ's Authorizing the Apostles for the Clergy, but also in their Authorizing others, and so forward, *the work is still* ascribed to the Holy Ghost. As to the Apostles the matter is evident in the Case of *Barnabas* and *Saul*, whose separation of them to the Ministry, is attributed to the Spirit. And we find the same verified of the Presbyters of the Churches of *Asia*, and in *Timothy* the Bishop of *Ephesus*; Of whom it is said expressly, *The Holy Ghost made them Overseers, Act. 20. 28.* Which (according to some) may signifie two things. First, their Ordination to the Ministerial Office, attributed to the Holy Ghost, as to the Original, by by whose descent upon the Apostles, they were Authorized to Communicate this Authority, to give Commissions to others, who were to succeed them in the Dignity and Office of instructing and governing the Church. Secondly, it may signifie the Act of Designation, Election, Nomination to the Ministry, which at that time was done by the *Special Revelation of God,*

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

God, and might properly be attributed to the Holy Ghost. And after this latter manner *Matthias* was chosen to succeed *Judas* in his Office; and *Saul* and *Barnabas* for the work, *Act. 1. 24. Act. 13. 2.* And if we have recourse herein to Church Story, we shall find how that the *Apostles* Ordain'd none of their *Converts* till they were *Tried* and *Approved* by the Holy Ghost. And that when *St. John* was return'd into *Asia*, he ordain'd every where such as were signified by the Spirit. And we are generally told by the Greek Fathers, that the primitive Bishops did not make *Clergy* of their own Heads, *but by the Order and Command of the Spirit.* Which being understood according to the distinction now mention'd, leaves no place of doubting of the manner or reality of the *Spirit's* concernment in ordaining men for the Clergy in that propheticall state of the Church, especially when it is considered, that all the sorts and degrees of Primitive Ecclesiasticks, are ascribed to the *Appointment* of the Holy Ghost, *Eph. 4. 11.*

And we have no ground of surmising that the Holy Ghost hath quitted his Interest in this great Concern; but rather to believe that he doth still preside at Holy and Regular Ordinations. Which are that Ecclesiastick Generation, whereby

by the Clergy is propagated, the Apostles still survive in their Successors, and Christ is still present with *them*. And we have no reason at all to doubt but that the Spirit doth as *Truly*, though not so *Visibly*, assist at the present *Ordering* of Ministers, as he did at the separation of *Barnabas* and *Saul*; and that Christ is as really present by the same Spirit, as when he breathed *Him* upon the Apostles, and thereby gave them Authority for the Work of the Ministry

And to this purpose we are to understand our own Church, when she bids the Persons to be *Ordain'd* and *Consecrated*, Receive the Holy Ghost *for the Office and Work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed to thee, by the imposition of our hands, &c.* And, Receive the Holy Ghost, *for the Office and Work of a Bishop in the Church, now committed to thee, by the imposition of our hands, &c.* The Holy Ghost in both forms is, I doubt not, to be taken in the same sense, and imports no more, *but the conferring of Authority* for the Execution of the *Offices* there *Specified*. Which Authority being convey'd by that we call *Orders* and *Consecration*, is fitly expressed by the same words, which were used by our Saviour in bestowing the
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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

same power upon the Apostles at his sending of them forth to Preach the Gospel, and gather and constitute a Church.

I have not as yet met with any thing considerable relating to the *Forms* of Ordination used in the Ancient Church, but I suppose they were all agreeable to that our Saviour used at the Ordination of the Apostles. But the Form of Ordination being only of Ecclesiastical Institution, the Churches might inoffensively vary therein. In the Greek Church the Form was to this effect: "*The Divine Grace, which always heals our Infirmities, and supplies our wants, doth create or promote N. the Venerable Deacon to be a Presbyter, the Presbyter most beloved of God to be a Bishop.*" In the Western Church they use another Form, wherein they confer upon the Presbyter the power of Consecrating *the Elements* in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, and of Binding and Loosing. Our own Church hath a Form peculiar to her self, yet much resembling the old Greek Form, mention'd by St. Clement. in his *Constitutions*, Lib. 8. c. 16. Wherein the power of *Preaching* also is confer'd upon the Presbyter. And though I am not able at present to give a full account of all the Ancient Forms of Ordination,

dination, yet it sufficeth our purpose, that none was every yet met with, wherein the Original and supreme Power of Ordaining is not attributed to the Holy Ghost.

C H A P. VII.

Of the incommunicableness of the Offices of the Clergy.

THough what has been said renders *the Holy Ghost's Interest and Agency* in the *Separation* of men to the *Calling* of the *Clergy*, to be undeniable, yet there are still some who think the Ministry to be a thing of *Labour* rather than *Honor*, and to which, *Abilities without Authority, are sufficient*; by which Position the Concern of the *Spirit* must be wholly evacuate, as to yielding any orderly Power and certain Method of attaining unto the *Sacerdotal Office*. And though the *Socinian* and *Enthusiast* are the more known, and profess'd Assertors of this *Conceit*; yet it is much to be feared that all Contemners of the Clergy are sown'd with the same Leaven. For if they were
thoroughly

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

thoroughly persuaded of the Divine Right of the Clergy, and that none can take that Honour unto himself, unless he be called of God, or by God's appointment; this one thing might be Charm enough both against *Contempt* and *Usurpation* of the same. And men would scarce be so hardy as to invade or *blaspheme* this *Calling*, when they saw it would involve them in the guilt of Sacrilege and Irreligion. But unto those who would lay that Holy Function Common, which God has placed within a *Sept*, and leave the Priesthood open to all that will enter it, without further Ceremony, than getting up and Ride; to the sober Consideration of such men, I would humbly recommend the ensuing particulars, to the end they may return to a better mind.

And first let them duly consider, how that St. *Paul* setting down the Nature of the Church, has styled *it the Body of Christ*. Where he means not a Similar Body, such as Fire, Air and Water, where, all the parts are alike and perform the same Office; *but a Body consisting of diversity of Organs for several Faculties and Operations*; such a Body as is not one Member but many, knit together with Unity and Charity, as with a Band of Health.

Health, As St. *Aug. Lib. 1. Cap. 16. De Doctr. Christian.* The whole fourteenth Chap. of 2 Cor. is inspired to this purpose, and designed to manifest, that in the Church of Christ, it is as monstrous and impossible for all to be Clergy-men, or Teachers and Governors, as for the Body of a man to be all *Tongue*, and *Eye*. And that it is as preposterous and destructive for all promiscuously to thrust themselves into the Ministry, as for the Members of a Man's Body to desert their Natural Situation, and all to press into the same place. The same Apostle has likewise term'd the Church a Building, *Eph. 2. 21.* wherein the Stones have their several and separate places, all being employed neither in the Foundation, nor the Corner; which Similitude relating to the *Congregation of Believers*, implies they were not all to bear the same Office. 'Tis true, that Christians in general are styled a Royal Priesthood, and a peculiar People, and a chosen Generation, *1 Pet. 2. 5, 9.* Yet it is also true, that this was affirm'd of the Hebrew Nation (*Ex. 19. 6.*) at the same time when God had among them his *Levites*, Priests and High-priests: And therefore can be now no more of privilege; and therefore no more

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

more Argument, to make all Christians properly Priests, than it did the *Jews*; among whom the usurpation of the Priesthood was Signally punished with most severe strokes. the words of St. *Peter* are a clear insinuation of the excellent Privileges procured by our Conversion to Christianity; and that like the Priests under the Law, who spent all their time in Sacrificing, and Religious Offices; so we should be constant in the service of God in the public Assemblies; which he requires of us, as he did the Sacrifices of the Levitical Priests. And in respect of that freedom which true Believers have obtain'd from Sin and Satan, and that liberty wherewith they are invested by Christ; as also in regard of that daily service they are to pay him, they are said to be Kings and Priests unto God, *Rev. i. 6.* So that from these Texts, such as would intitle all to the Sacerdotal, may also instate them with the Regal Office.

But without a Figure; The choice of Persons for the Clergy, and the incommunity of that Function, is such an express Doctrine of the *Scripture*, that it may seem no less superfluous to prove than it is Sacrilegious to gainsay it. And if we duly weigh the words of the first

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Commission, as they occur, *Mat.* 28. they supersede all further confirmation of what we now speak. For they so plainly fix the Ministerial Offices, and make them such, appropriate and Authoritative Acts, as that none but the duly order'd can be blameless, and undertake them.

But besides all this, if according to some mens Fancies, Abilities be all that is requisite to make a Clergy-man; then it is but prudent and reasonable to make due enquiry into those Abilities, and to be duly inform'd of their Nature and Reality. Now, what Abilities soever any man can pretend unto, must either be *Infused*, or *Acquired*. If men assume unto themselves the Priests Office, meerly upon the pretence of *Infused Abilities*, or *Extraordinary Gifts*; then it is just to put them upon the proving such pretences by that sort of Testimony which was ever required in such a case: And to make them shew their Extraordinary Gifts, by Extraordinary Works: For if these pretenders are to be credited upon their own bare word, how easily will it then be for every bold, facing, confident Fellow, to rub his Forehead, to pretend to Extraordinary Gifts and Abilities, and so cozen the World, bely the *Holy Ghost*,

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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

(from whom all such real Gifts do come) and consequently to destroy all Order in the Church.

But if these Abilities are *acquired*, be they never so excellent, yet they must undergo Tryal and Examination, lest they should be but fanciful and presumptuous; and when found in the greatest perfection whereof they are capable, *yet* they can of themselves no more make a Clergy man, than a Judge of Assizes, or any Secular Magistrate; which is a *Power* confer'd upon Abilities.

The next thing which ought herein soberly to be considered, is the *Charge* undertaken by the Clergy; which all acknowledge to be no less than the *Cure of Souls*. For we cannot suppose the great *Shepherd* of the Sheep, who loved them so well as to lay down his life for them, would after his departure, leave them to wander up and down, without any to guide or feed them. But that upon his own Decease he committed them to a chosen Clergy, at whose hands he at last will exact an account of their Souls. And this his Care we find instanced in that strict Command he laid upon *Peter* to feed his *Sheep* and *Lambs*. Which the Apostle faithfully executed himself, and exhorted

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hath the free disposal of all mens Estates, hath given an Assignment to those that Preach the Gospel, of *so* much out of their Auditors Substance, as may decently maintain them. And therefore according to the Apostle's arguing, we must deal worse with the Clergy, than with our *Oxen*, Plow-men, and Threshers, and violate the Laws of God, Nature and Reason, if we deny them a Right to be maintain'd by the Ministry, to whom we grant a Right to discharge it. And that double honor allotted to the Elders who labour well in the Word and Doctrin, is understood by some, of Respect and Maintenance, and by all, of an ample allowance, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. And this is an Argument which will make men at least so provident, as not to admit more to be Preachers, than they are willing and able to maintain. And we must own it for a singular piece of bounteous Wisdom in the Almighty, to settle a subsistence for the Clergy, that without the Interruption of Worldly Cares they might attend to *Reading*, *Exhortation*, and *Doctrin*. And when God left out *Levi* in the Division of the *Land*, it was highly to his advantage, for in stead of a *Twelfth* part God appointed him

him a Tenth, and that too upon such terms, as made his Portion much more considerable than any of his Brethrens: And by this allowance the Priests were not only freed from the distracting troubles of the World, but also enabled to the obliging Offices of *Charity* and *Almsdeeds*; and not only apt to teach, but also given to *Hospitality*. Which are still loudly called for at the hands of the Clergy, even by those who grudge them those Revenues, without which they will be able to do neither. But I leave this, to return to our men of great Abilities; whom I heartily request, to imploy their parts in helping the weaker Brethren, by the Methods of *Peace*, *Submission*, and *Charity*. But if nothing will serve them but the Offices of the Priesthood; and that either through *Envious Faction*, or *mistaken Zeal*, they will be fingering the Hallowed Censor, and the *Holy Fire*, I then leave them to the Consideration of their Ancestors, *Corah* and *Uzziah*, for Instruction or Affrightment.

In the last place, I would gladly have those who would have all without distinction to perform the Offices of the Clergy, to consider the many inconveniencies which will unavoidably befall

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

both Church and State, Religious and Civil Government from such an *Enormous* Principle.

First, As to the Church and Religion, the liberty of letting men, presumptuous of their Abilities, take upon them to become *Teachers*, will prove the ready way to make even Preaching it self, which some account the *All of Religion*, to become weak and contemptible ; by being exposed to all the incongruities, follies, dotages, and impostures of the *Ignorant* and *Confident*, and of the *Crafty* and *Deceitful* ; and make the *Scripture* it self, the foundation and rule of Religion, hourly liable to such freakish and wild Expositions, as will make it most unlike it self, and least able to be that, for which it was designed : Even a compleat Rule of Faith and Conversation, Truth and Holiness. And that there is more than a possibility of what I speak, those have sufficiently inform'd us, who have expounded *Scripture* out of its Senses, and have so Commented the *Laws* thereof, till they have in them no manner of *Obligation*. Who have made the Creation of the World an *Allegory*, the Redemption of Man a *Metaphor*, and Heaven and Hell but a *Trope*. And if we
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were to trace all the Heresies from the time of *Simon Magus* down to our own, we shall find them to have risen from making God's *Word* to speak according to the *Interest* and *Passions* of such men, as had once got into their hands the liberty of teaching the People. Men have generally heard of *Julian's* contrivance to ruine Christianity, and that it was a granting all the Sects thereof a liberty of *Assembling* when they pleased, and teaching what they would. *Ut quisque nullo vetante Religioni suae serviret intrepidus*, (*Ammianus Marcellinus Lib. 22.*) to give every one, who pleases, a liberty to promote their own opinions, and serve the Interest of their Sect. Now it cannot be hoped that where Religion is settled in the greatest *Purity* and *Truth*, it should there continue long in that State, if every one without danger of punishment may falsify and corrupt it. And how this will be prevented where all that please may *preach*, I am not yet able to imagine.

And as this Indiscrimination of Teachers will thus expose Religion to perpetual Corruptions; so will it have but little better influence upon the peace and safety of the State. For when every one hath a liberty to Teach what and whom he pleaseth, we may conclude

from the natural Pride of men, they will desire to raise a *Sect* and become Head of a *Party*. Over whose Consciences when they have once got a competent Power, it will not be long till they will have both their persons, and fortunes at their Devotion. And their Gather'd Churches will be soon trained into an Army, there being no fitter materials of *New Troops*, than *New Profelytes*. Who being imployed in the first warmth and briskness of their *Zeal*, will not stick at any Attempt tending to the Advancement of their *Way*; and to the removal of whatsoever obstructs their design. And though the pretence of all this be *Conscience* and *Zeal for the Lord*, the *Removal of Abuses*, and *The publick Welfare*; Yet every Male-content will help to encrease the Cry, and all the Sons of Ambition, Covetousness, Envy and Revenge, will empty themselves into the Faction. And those who least Care for Religion, will yet make it their pretext to ruine that which is *Established*, and therewith the State. The sad truth of which Observation dear-bought experience doth every where attest.

Now, if this levelling of the Clergy, by granting to every one that lists leave
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to invade their Office, will inevitably prove fatal both to Religion and Government, *Church* and *State*; it will then be the best Policy and most certain interest to maintain the *Priesthood* in its primitive *Esteem*. And seeing too that the *Calling* of the *Clergy* is of Divine Authority, it must needs render all pretences of contemning it upon the Account of its Original, Atheistical and Blasphemous; and all Usurpation thereof, Sacrilegious and Profane.

And having in the antecedent Discourse offer'd at something of Apologetick in behalf of the Clergy in General, by proving the *Divine Authority*, and Catholick Esteem, of their Calling; So the succeeding Sheets design a more particular Apology for the present Clergy of this Church. Which may be plainliest done by answering the spurious, and setting down the real occasions, and grounds of their Contempt.

C H A P. VIII.

How the Clergy in all Ages have undergone Contempt: The Character of their Contemners, &c.

BEfore we enquire into the Pretences which are commonly brought for the Contempt we speak of, it will be expedient to consider, that the despising of the Clergy has been the unhappy carriage of *other Ages* as well as our own. Which is a thing so deplorably manifest, that we need not much insist, either upon its proof or declaration. For if we soberly consult the Oracles of God, they will yield us undeniable attestations, that to Contemn the *Stewards of Mysteries*, is a disease so Epidemical in respect of time, that it may seem to have been intailed upon the several Generations of Mankind, as *Gehazi's* Leprosie was upon his Children. For if we begin with *Enoch*, who was but the Seventh from *Adam*, and the first Clergy-man the Scripture mentions, though he was one, whose upright Conversation obviated all Exceptions, as *Walking with God and pleasing him*; and one who became

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

56

became an Example of Religiousness to all Generations: Yet for all this, he in his own Person met with Obloquy and hard Speeches, and prophesied of Men who would so treat the Clergy until the Consummation of all things. Upon whom God at last shall send his Holy Myriads, infinite Armies of Angels to take Vengeance.

Nor did it fare better herein with *Noah*, not withstanding that he also *Walked with God and pleased him, and was a Pledge of the World, and a Preacher of Righteousness*: And so wanted nothing to recommend him to the Respect and Reverence of his Age. Yet for many Years he was so far despised, that none took notice of his Sermons, unless to deride and pervert them. For we read not of any who were reclaim'd by his preaching, but that all remain'd in as much carnal Supineness, obstinacy and disobedience, as if *Noah* had never told them of their imminent danger and destruction by a Deluge; and by his building of an *Ark*, given them a sensible Demonstration of what he foretold. For they ate and drank, and followed their old trade of taking strange Women to their Wives, and regarded not till the Flood came and swept them all away. If *I might here insert Moses* among the *Priests*, because he was sent from

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

from God to preach deliverance to *Israel*, we shall find him every where vilified and contemn'd. The first Essay of his Message was entertain'd with a petulant Questioning of his Authority ; *Who made thee a judge over us?* And through the whole *Sacred Legend* of his *Life*, we find him continually opposed and spoke against by *Conjurers, factious and gain-saying Zealots*, and the *humoresome, and uncertain multitude*. And as to the first High-Priest under the law, the Behaviour of *Corah* and his adherents toward him, is a sufficient Testimony and Illustration of the incorrigible impudence in contemnners of Priests.

And letting pass the Ancient Patriarchs, who had no part of their Life free from *Contumelies* and *Reproaches*; if we look into the times of the Prophets, we may learn the Lot of them all, from that of *Jeremy*, who was mock't, jeer'd, and droll'd upon, meerly for being a Prophet of the Lord. But we need not fasten upon Particulars, because we find by the general Account given of the Prophets Sufferings, that they were no less than cruel *Mockings and Scourgings, Bands and Imprisonments*, and the most exquisite kinds, and Martyrdoms; being *destitute afflicted, and tormented*.

Nor were the Clergy better dealt with
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in the times of the Gospel: For in the Years of its greatest Efficacy, when the Apostles preach'd it with the purest zeal, *noblest Industry*, wisest Courage, and in the true *Evidence and Demonstration of the Spirit*, they were traduced for the vilest Offenders, and accounted no better than the off-scouring and Laughing-games, *Catharmata*, ac *Ludibria* (as a *Modern Apologist*) of the whole World. We find one of them stoned to death by those, who were not able to resist the *Wisdom* and the *Spirit* by which he spake. At one place a Sorcerer, at another a Mechanick, and at a third a sect of *Restless Fanaticks* revile St. Paul. At *Ephesus* the Tradesmen impeach him, in *Asia* a sort of vile Apostates utterly deny his Power; and we cannot be ignorant, how Reverendly the Apostle was treatted by the *Virtuosi* at *Athens*, when they called him (*Spermologus*) an empty, idle, talkative fellow.

But the one Example of our Saviour ought to supersede all other in this Concern, who was despised and rejected of Men, and not esteemed of in the World; whose Kindred said he was beside himself, and many said he had a Devil and was mad; who by some was called Inchanter, Sorcerer, and by others Samaritan, Beelzebub, Glutton, Drunkard: And to accomplish

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

accomplish their slander of his Credit, they unjustly Scourged and most Cruelly Crucified his Person, and *put him to open shame* And to leave them without any colour of reply, they acted all this Villany against Christ, *when he was preaching the Glorious Gospel of Salvation*; and therein laying down such Rules of *Life*, as were more enlightning of the Mind, more advancing of humane Nature, and more directly tending to the Introduction and Settlement of Piety, Justice, and *Good-will*, among Men, than was contain'd either in the Law of *Moses*, or the Institutions of the wisest Philosophers, as *Orpheus, Pythagoras, Numa, Plato*, who were in some sort Reformers of the World.

Now if the Prophets, Apostles, and *Our Lord himself*, were vexed and interrupted with *Rebukes, Revilings, Disputes, Contumelies*, &c. whilst they pressed the World to believe and practise the Truth; it is then abundantly clear, that the Contempt of the Clergy is no new Invention, nor to be wonder'd at as the *Monster* of the present Age; but that it hath ever been the practice of *Unreasonable Men*. For there is no place or time to be met with, since the planting or growth of Religion, wherein its Ministers have not by some been contemptuously

ously treated: And we have no great hopes to meet herein with Amendment, who live in those latter Days, in which *St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. Jude*, with one mouth assure us; that there should not only be a departue from the Faith, but also *Scoffers and Cruel Mockers*, both of the Gospel and its Ministers; and a Race of *Ungodly Men* who would make the Gospel it self matter of *Obloquy and Shame* to those who *preach it*. Of which sort were those Miscreants, who put *St. Paul* upon the Apology: *I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto Salvation, to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

And therefore the present Clergy ought not to repine or murmur to see themselves so badly dealt with by the World, when they shall be so far recollected as to consider, that after the same manner it hath also dealt with the Prophets, Apostles, and Christ himself. And it is enough for the Disciple that he be as his Master, and the Servant as his Lord: If they have called the Master of the house *Beelzebub*, how much more shall they call those of his Household? The most that a Disciple or Servant can aspire to, is to come to his Master's Perfection. Whom if the World has reviled
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under the most hateful and ignominious to expect to be proportionably dealt with, in their respective Orders and Places. And as Christ exhorted his first Clergy not to despond or be terrified by any thing should befall them, but on the contrary to be Courageous, and Undaunted in their Ministry : So the *Regular* Clergy of our own Church, ought not to let their present Contempt damp their Spirits, depress their Courage, dishearten their Industry, or weaken their hands *in the work of the Lord*. For duly considered, this doth altogether oblige them to a more signal care, that through this Cloud of *Ignominy* and Contempt, their innocency may break forth as the Light, and their just dealing as the Noon-day. And with a greater zeal they should now *magnify their Office* the more, assert the Sacredness and Honor of their Calling, against the *Affront* and *Prejudices* of an unpropitious and gain-saying World.

'Tis true, the contempt we speak of is able to vie Antiquity with the best things ; but the Persons that now use it have no more cause to glory in this Antiquity, *than in murder and lying*, which are no less Ancient than the *Old Serpent*. Nor will they have greater Reason to vindicate themselves upon the *Quality* of

of their Predecessors; when they shall see them to have been persons of *Corrupt Judgments; Factious, Schismatical, and Apostates*. Men of the greatest Vices, and basest Interests; of the worst Principles and most ill-govern'd Passions; Rash, Inconsiderate and Foolish in the *Things of God*. Raging Waves of the Sea, foaming out their own shame. The rest of whose Character may be made out of *St. Jude*; one main end of whose Epistle was to acquaint the World what kind of Persons those are who *Speak evil of Dignities*, or deal contumeliously with the Clergy. And *St. Peter* speaking of the same Subject, describes the Contemners to be a bold, insolent sort of Men, *2 Pet. 2. 10. &c.*

C H A P. IX.

A Survey of the pretences for the Contempt of the Clergy: First, want of Example.

THE first Pretence, which with greatest speciousness and plausibility is brought to justify the Contempt
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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

of the Clergy, is the Faultiness of their carriage. For this being once surmised, we quickly find them reflected upon, with a *Physician Cure thy self; Pluck the Beam out of thine own Eye; Thou that teachest others, why dost thou not teach thy self? Thou that sayest another shall not steal, dost thou commit Sacrilege? Turpe est Doctori, &c.* Such as these are the usual Topicks whence Contempt is poured upon the Clergy in general, especially by those who by an Uncharitable *Synecdoche* impute unto All the failures of a very Few; Making the whole twelve to be unfaithful, because one of them betray'd his Master. And yet were this Accusation as true, as it is manifestly otherwise; and that the Clergy were as ill-govern'd Men, as those usually are who despise them: Yet those who reflect upon Mens Bad Examples (when they may possibly happen) to the prejudice of their Calling, seem either not rightly to understand, or not duly to consider what that is, which with so much noise they make use of.

For if they did either clearly apprehend, or maturely weigh, the Nature and importance of Examples, they would certainly confess, that the *Bad* are utterly to be avoided, and the *Good* never to be

be made the *Rule* and measure of our *Actions*. But that the best Examples are chiefly to be looked upon, as helps and furtherances, *Spurs* and *Incentives* to well-doing. And that when we grow dull and unactive, flat and drowlie in our Duties, we may rouse and awaken our selves to a greater Vigour and Fervency, by reflecting upon the Zeal and Industry of others. 'Tis true, Example is a very short and plain way of Instruction; but it is true also, that as our Actions at the last shall be *Examin'd*, *Tried*, and *Sentenced*, so they are now to be *Directed*, only by *Divine Precept*. He therefore justly incurs the Imputation of obeying Man rather than God, who in this case follows *Example*, and not the *Commandment*. Those who upon this Account assault the Clergy with no less Clamour, than I am afraid ill-will, seem not always to be Men of so much Justice and Ingenuity, as to afford that good Example, they so loudly call for. Notwithstanding that every one from the *Spade* to the *Scepter*, are obliged to an *Exemplary Conversation*, as well, as those of the Priesthood. For as to the influence of Examples it is proportionably the same in all Ranks of Men, and

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

at the great impartial Audit, Accounts thereof, will undoubtedly be exacted *without Respect of Persons*; and the People as strictly reckon'd with, as the *Priests*. The Quality of Persons can make no Alteration in the Nature of things, nor render that a Vice or Vertue in one Man, which is none in another. And when Men of any Rank or Condition, high or low, become defective in that Exemplariness of Life, which the Quality and Relation wherein they stand, require from them; then I conceive that all those Coals may be heap'd upon their Heads, which with so great impetuosity are cast upon the Clergies.

It will also highly import those, who Contemn the Clergy upon the Account we now speak of, to be soberly careful, lest by giving too much to their Personal Concernments, they make not the Power and efficacy of God's Ordinances to depend upon the Holiness of those, who dispense them. And if in some measure Men were not tainted with this Error, they would fix their Eyes upon God and his Institution, and look upon the Ministers of his *Word* and Sacraments, &c. As the *Greek Church* did (in the *Euchologue* p. 23. already mention'd:) wherein she praiseth God, that
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of his infinite Condescension he hath given them Masters and Teachers, not only of the same Nature and like infirmities with themselves, *but also of like guilt, and under the same Condemnation.* And we have no small Obligation to be truly thankful to the Almighty, that he hath placed in the Ministry of the Glorious Gospel, such to offer Spiritual Oblations and Sacrifices in behalf of the People, as have a sense of their Infirmities; *and who in themselves know the Burden and subtilty of Sin.* To whom our Access might be the more free and easie, and whom we are to value according to their Office: And Imployment. For who is *Paul*, or who is *Apollos*, but Ministers by whom we believe? Even as God gave to every Man. *Paul* may plant, and *Apollos* Water: But neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the Increase. If the eloquent *Apollos*, or learned *Paul*, live the holy lessons they teach, it is their Crown and Praise; and likewise of great moment to the People, who out of weakness and infirmity, are hardly brought to believe the Truth of that Doctrine, which is not attested by the Example and Practice of those who

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

preach it. But still the Water is the same, and as full of cooling and refreshment, whether the Pipe be of Lead or Gold, that conveys it. The Jewel suffers no diminution in its real worth or value, because it is lodged in a wooden Casket. And the Gospel of Christ is still the Power of God unto Salvation to every one that believeth, tho never so great unworthiness attend their Persons who declare it.

It fares with Christ's Embassadors, as with those of Earthly Princes, whose Deportment, though it sink below their Character; yet that doth no way evacuate the Power of their Commission, or render ineffectual what according to their Master's order they transact in his *Name*. And that this is the plain Case of the Clergy, we may learn from the Blessed Author of Christianity, in *Mat.* 23. 2, 3. And if God, whose ways are past finding out, should set over us as *Bad Guides* as those our Saviour there speaks of; Men who live not at all according to their own *Prescriptions*: Yet we are to respect their *Office*, and *Doctrin*, and not their *Actions* and *Manners*; to *observe* and *do* what they *Teach*, but not to do after their *Works*: And to laud and praise God, that he hath so far considered

sidered the Frailties of Men, and worth of his own Ordinances, as to tye the Efficacy thereof to any thing in their Dispensers, but to his own Institution. St. *Augustin* (in his Prologue to his Books of Christian Doctrin) observes, that *Paul*, though at first he was instructed by Advice from Heaven, was afterward sent to a Man to receive the Sacraments, and to be joyned to the Church: And that though an Angel declared the Approbation of *Cornelius's* Prayers and Alms-deeds; yet he was not to rest there, but to send to *Peter*, both to receive Baptism from him, and to be instructed what he was to believe, Hope and Love. If all things should have been transacted by Angels, how mean and abject would this have render'd the Condition of Men! Or, if God should not vouchsafe to speak to Men by Men, how could that be true, that Man is the Temple of God (1 Cor. 3.) seeing Responses are not given out of that Temple, but that all Man's instruction should immediately sound from Heaven? Charity which doth bind Men with the Bond of Unity, and as it were mix and blend Minds together, would have no occasion or opportunity for this excellent work, if there were nothing that one

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

Man might learn of another, but that all were to be done by Angels. And the same Father justly makes it a singular Act of *Divine* Wisdom, to send the Eunuch to *Philip*, or appoint Men, and not Angels to instruct the Church; to constitute Teachers of our own Passions, and to dispense this Heavenly Treasure out of Earthen Vessels; that the whole excellency of the Power might be of God. But to proceed: Grant that the Clergy were as faulty in their Conversation as we are willing to represent them, yet this may move us to reflect upon ourselves, and to Consider, whether it may not be our own fault, that our Spiritual Guides are so Faulty; and that if we are slain under the inconvenience of Bad Shepherds, whether it is not because we deserve no better. For when God told *Israel* that he would give them Pastors according to his own mind, who should feed them with knowledge and understanding, if they would cease to be disobedient Children, and turn from the Evil of their ways, *Jer.* 3. 13. He plainly shew'd, that the way to have Faultless Teachers, was to reform our selves; and to endeavour to deserve better at God's Hand, if in this Case he deals strictly

strictly with us. However we cannot but surcease to condemn our Pastors upon the account of their failings, unless that we are either innocent our selves, or being guilty can be content to be despised upon that Score.

But yet seeing that a worse Use is made of the Clergies, than of any other mens irregularities; and that we are generally prone to follow them in the steps that are foulest: And seeing that there is a *Set* of Men who are not only curious to Observe, but greedy to suck up the very dregs of their actions; and who strive to imitate their Spiritual Guides, as the *Greeks* did their Orators and Philosophers, *only* in their *Weakness* and *Imperfections*: Seeing likewise that men are apt to make choice of the worst part of the Example, and to take more notice of one single miscarriage, than of a *thousand* good actions: And what is yet more deplorable, seeing that contrary to all sobriety and duty, not a few are forward to expose the Nakedness of their Fathers; and contrary to all equity and justice, (as in the Case of *Eli's* Sons) to abhor the service of God, for the faults of the Priest: After these considerations, I cannot be so blinded

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

blinded with affection to the men I speak of, as not to think it their bounden duty to give all diligence to shew themselves patterns of good works, Incorruptness, Gravity, and Sincerity, and to be Examples in Word, in Conversation, in Charity, in Faith, in Purity. That in so doing they may both save themselves, and them that hear them. And at the same time make those asham'd, who speak against them, as having no evil to say of them, or lay to their Charge. And as for those (as doubtless some there may be) who do otherwise, *I would* (in the sense and Language of the Holy Ghost) *they were even cut off*. But as for mine own part, *when I see him that binds up my wounds, to be careless of his own*; that he walks in darkness, by whose Candle I am enlightned; or that he becomes a Cast-away, who is the Instrument of my Salvation; I will pity his Condition, and use his Ministry as God has appointed: leaving him to receive as he deserves, and to stand or fall to his own Master. For I dare not reproach the hand, be it never so Leprous, by which I am help'd to *Cleansing*: nor insult over their wanderings, by whose directions I walk aright. And
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though the miscarriages of my Guide be never so hainous, I shall neither answer nor be punished for them, if I have no way contributed to their Commission.

C H A P. X.

A Survey of the Pretences of the Contempt of the Clergy: Secondly, Idleness.

WHat has been spoken in the Antecedent Chapter, may both help to rectifie a common and usual mistake concerning Examples in general; and also suggest a little more Sobriety to those who so eagerly manage the supposed want thereof in the Clergy, to their irreparable *Disparagement*. Because it lets them see how that every tittle of their Argument may recoyl upon themselves. And how we all (*Cæteris paribus*) are as much obliged to an Exemplary Conversation, and wanting it are *as much* to be blamed, as those from whom we so rigourously exact it.

But

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

But because we are herein to deal with men, who usually esteem all serious consideration meer dulness and drudgery; it cannot be hop'd, that what has been spoken should prove much Operative upon them; or, that if it should happen that the *Contemners* should be so far moved with what has been said, as to quit this first pretence of their Contempt; yet their great desire to finish what they have begun, will quickly furnish them with other Pretences. And here it will be easie to suppose them assaulting the Credit of the Clergy with the old Accusation of *Idleness* Which I confess is a Vice of so debasing a quality, that it may justly lessen the Reputation of any man who therewith is infected. And it is likewise so inconsistent with the Work (or Office) of the Ministry, that I am perswaded there is none of that *Calling*, can be guilty thereof; at least not in that degree, in which a *Maligning World* would represent them to be.

For if we may suppose the present Clergy to be men of so much understanding as to know the Nature of *Idleness* and Industry: That according to a Prophet of their own, *There is nothing* more troublesome to a good mind, than to do nothing.

nothing. " That *Idleness* is no less devoid
" of Comfort than of Profit. While both
" are the genuin Incomes of *Industry*. That
" besides the furtherance of their Estate,
" the Mind doth both delight and better
" it self by Exercise. That it fares with
" most *as with the Man* after God's own
" heart, whom no Temptation durst assail
" while he was taken up with business of
" Importance, and the publick Cares of
" State, &c. When this and infinite
more, becomes the matter of a Clergy-
man's thoughts (or indeed of any) he
cannot but have all *Idleness* and *Sloth*
not only under a jealous, but a detesta-
ble aspect.

And yet its sordid Nature doth not
render it fitter for our avoidance than its
Consequences ; which though to all are
very pernicious, yet to none more than
to the Clergy. As may be collected from
those fearful Comminations so frequent-
ly denounced against such *Pastors*, as
through their *Idleness* destroy and scat-
ter the Sheep of God's Pasture. To whom
the Lord saith expressly : " I will visit
" you for the wickedness of your works,
" and the Remnant of my Sheep will I
" gather together, and bring them to their
" Folds, and I will set up Shepherds o-
" ver them that will feed them. And the
" Threat-

“Threatning reaches all those Shepherds,
 “who take more care to feed themselves
 “than the Flocks : who eat the Fat, and
 “Clothe themselves with the Wool, but
 “look not to the strengthning of the
 “weak, the healing of the sick ; to bind
 “up the broken, to bring home again
 “that which was driven away, and to en-
 “quire after that which was lost. All
 which Sheep the Lord hath sworn to re-
 quire at the hands of such careless Shep-
 herds. As may be seen in *Jer.* 23. and
Ezek. 34. A great part of which Cha-
 pters was inspired to this purpose. To
 this may be added *St. Paul’s* advice to the
 Asian Clergy, *Act.* 20. 28. Take heed
 to your selves and to all the Flock over
 which the Holy Ghost hath made you
Overseers, to feed the Church of God,
 which he hath purchased with his own
 blood. And *2 Tim.* 4. 1. I charge
 thee before God and the Lord Jesus
 Christ, who shall judge the quick and
 the dead, when he appears in his King-
 dom: Preach the word, be instant in
 season, out of season, reprove, rebuke,
 exhort with all lenity and diligent in-
 struction. Now if it be safe for us to
 presume the Clergy both to read and
 weigh those dreadful Menaces, so fre-
 quently utter’d from God, by the mouths
 of

of his Prophets, against Sloath and Carelessness in his Messengers; or those many earnest Exhortations of the Holy Apostles for its prevention and amendment; we may Charitably conclude, that they will not dare to take part therewith, not only for fear of Man's *Contempt*, but the consuming *Wrath* of God.

And if we may further presume, that there is so much understanding yet left in the Clergy, as to enable them to apprehend the greatness of their Task, and how it is no less than to raise up *the saln Kingdom* of Christ, and to demolish that of Satan, &c. and how that the fruits of so doing are no meaner, than the saving of their own Souls, and theirs too of whom they have taken the charge, and one day must give an Account. If we may yet further presume, that the Clergy do in some tolerable manner comprehend the Importance of those several Titles, with which the Holy Ghost hath invested them; and how that they are as so many Memorials and Monitors of *Labour, Diligence* and *Care*. In short: if we may presume the Clergy, like other Men, to wear their Eyes in their heads, and apprehend and consider such obvious and plain things as we now speak;

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

speak ; it may be hoped, upon the stock
 of common Ingenuity, that they will
 never suffer themselves to run to moss,
 or let God's House drop through by rea-
 son of the Idleness of *their* Hands ; or in-
 dure to see the Flocks depending upon
 their feeding, to grow cold in their
 zeal, drooping in their Courage, faint-
 ing in their Spiritual Strength, and infee-
 bled in all their Graces. And all this to
 please a Vice which is unmanly in it self,
 foully derogatory to the Honour of their
 Calling, contradictory to their Pastor all
 Character, and in *Them* of more dreadful
 Consequences, than it can possibly be
 in any *other*.

In the last place, if we may suppose the
 Clergy to remember, and make consci-
 ence of that promise of *Faithful diligence*
 which they made to God and the Church,
 when they were received into *Holy Or-*
ders ; this alone will be sufficient effectually
 to bind them to bend their whole
 endeavours, without Fraud or Sophisti-
 cation, to the due discharge of their
Office ; being well assured that small
 benefit will accrew to the Church from
 their *Abilities*, if they be not *Faithful*.
 For the Clergy cannot be ignorant that
 their *Sufficiency without Endeavours* to
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do that good which their *Place* requires, is no better than wrapping the Talent in a Napkin. Industry with lesser Parts is more serviceable to Religion, than great Learning without it. And an *Idle*, is little better than a *Blind Guide*. And being persuaded that these things are the matter of the Clergies serious meditation, I cannot imagine they should ever be guilty of that *Idleness* which is so malapertly laid at their door. But I am rather induced to believe that that which in them bears this Odious Name, is nothing else *but the Regular* performance of their Duty: Partly occasion'd by *their* Carriage, who prefer the pleasing of some Mens *Caprices* before the observation of their Rule. In which rank it may be no great iniquity to place all those, who make all other Parts of the Church tributary to the *Pulpit*. By which they have occasion'd a Capricious sort of People to conclude all *Publick Service* to be *preaching*, and to esteem all those to be dumb Dogs, who open not as often as they please, and in a sense different to the Apostles, *preach the Word in Season and out of Season*. But as for mine own Part, when I observe our Clergy to *pray, preach and Catechize* as

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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

the Church enjoyns and directs them When I see them careful to fort and feed their Flocks according to their Age and Condition, giving to every one his Portion in due Season, and with fidelity, prudence and industry, observing the Rules of their Sacred Function; I cannot but think those Men to be forsaken both of all justice and ingenuity, who now condemn them upon the score of *Idleness*. But if there be any who are herein delinquent; it were more justice and generosity to give a Catalogue of such Drones to those who have an undoubted Power to make them *Labour*, or *Unhive* them; *And that the Righteous be not as the Wicked.*

CHAP. XI.

A View of the Pretences of the Contempt of the Clergy : Thirdly of Pride.

I Shall not here attempt any Philosophical Discourse either of the Nature or Causes of Pride. All that concerns our present Enquiry falls under either the contrariety that it bears to the practice

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

83

Office and Command of Christ, or the danger and odiousness thereof in his Ministers.

And as to the first of these, it is so apparent in the Holy Gospel, that none can be ignorant thereof who is not an *Utter stranger* to that inspired System of Christianity. For we plainly find therein, how the *Blessed* Author of our Faith shews Favour to none but the Humble, nor will admit any to be of his retinue, who has not first Learned of him to be *Meek and Lowly*. And Christ speaking of that Prelation, and Government, which was to be in his Church, he sufficiently intimated that he would not have it to be like that of the World. *That is*, not a Government whose Dominion is Despotic; the *Coercion imperious*; the Laws externally Compulsory; and the Titles big and swelling. But on the Contrary he hath insinuated how that he would have the Government of his Church to be paternal and persuasive, and the Laws to be full of Admonition and the Titles of the Governours to be significative of Affection and Labour, of Burden and Humility: And the Highest Dignity, a meek Ministration, and a Laborious Employment. And when the A-

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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

postles fell into an Ambitious quarrelling which of them should be greatest, Christ checkt their Pride, and gave them this Everlasting Rule of Clerical deportment; He that will be *Greatest among you, let him be your Servant*. And we need come no nearer to discover the Odiousness of Pride in Christ's Ministers, seeing both by his Example and Precept he hath thus recommended to them the clear contrary. And certainly Christ would have those, who for their Greater Dignities in the Church are styled *Stars*, and *Angels*, to imitate the one, by appearing less for their greater Height; and the other, who though Peers of Heaven, yet approve themselves *Ministring Spirits* to the poorest of God's Servants upon Earth.

And the same Rule of Clerical Deportment, laid down by our Blessed Saviour, is no very dark intimation, that the Clergy are in danger to fall into this sin. And we want not Reason to be hereof suspicious, when we consider that Pride being an Internal Vice, is apt to make impression upon those Notions and Speculations of the Mind, wherein the Office of the Clergy renders them more egregiously Conversant. For as Pride took up its first Seat in a

Spiritual

ritual Being : so it hath ever since acted with greatest vigor in Spiritual Concernments, and been most liable to Spiritual Persons. In whom it can never happen without working a less mischief, than Strife and Contention. And indeed it seems impossible to be otherwise, seeing Pride naturally exerts it self above Competition, and superadds disdain and revenge to actuate its other Motions. As was seen in his Case, who being denied a Bishoprick sought to be revenged upon Episcopacy. And as *Solomon's* Arraignment of Pride for the Mother of Contention, is true in the General; so it is more especially true of those Contentions, wherewith the Church in any Age hath been afflicted: There being none to be met with wherein Pride, under several appearances, hath not been a principal Actor. And without all further Enlargement, I am sufficiently inclined to believe, upon the account of what is now suggested, that there is no Clergy-man will venture to give the least Entertainment to a sin, which hath been the Mother of so much mischief both in Heaven and Earth. For how tolerable soever this Vice may seem in men of another Character; yet it can never hope for excuse or mitigation in their

Carriage, who are his Ministers, among whose wonderful virtues, none was more *Stupendious*, than his own *Humility*.

And therefore that which most commonly, and with greatest assurance, some men call Pride in the Clergy, seems to be nothing else, but a keeping themselves from those *Promiscuous Familiarities*, which experience and reason tell them, are apt to be attended with *Contempt* and *Disrespect*.

Now, if upon their Separation to the Work of the Ministry, the Clergy betake themselves to a *Reverend and Pious Reservation* as men professing Retirement from the World above others; if out of a Conscientious apprehension that an undifferenced Conversation with the Laity (of what Rank soever) is altogether contrary to the Calling of the Clergy; if out of fear that a too free Communion with the people will lessen their Authority, and rebate the force of their Instructions and Reproofs, when there is most need to deliver them with the greatest Vigour and Power; if foreseeing that this Communion (I now speak of) may engage them if not to commit, yet often to connive at those things, which they ought altogether to rebuke; and that it is one Engine

to break down the Veneration, which is the Fence to their Function against all Popular Rudeness and Encroachments : if some (I say) of these Considerations, or all in Confort, shall justly move the Clergy to such a Religious distance and Retirement from the *Conversations* of the World, as the *Inconsiderate* may call Pride; they ought with great satisfaction to bear the imputation, and to account it their Crown to be contemn'd upon this Score. Especially when they shall consider that their Carriage herein is agreeable to the Canons, Constitutions and Decrees of the Ancient Church, and to the Canons and Injunctions of *our own*; and no way clashing with the Rules of a prudent and Charitable Conduct. As to our own Church, "She commands all Ecclesiastical Persons, not to resort to any Taverns or Ale-houses, for any other cause, than for their honest necessities. And that after their Meals they shall not give themselves to *Drinking* or *Riot*, nor spend their time idly by day or night, at Dice, Cards, or Tables, or any unlawful game. But at all times, as they shall have leisure, to hear or read some

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

“ part of the Holy *Scriptures*, or im-
 “ ploy themselves with some other ho-
 “ nest Studie or Exercise. Always do-
 “ ing the things which appertain to ho-
 “ nesty, and the Profit of the Common-
 “ wealth. Ever having in their mind,
 “ that they ought to excel all others in
 “ purity of life, and to be Examples to
 “ the people to live well and Christian-
 “ ly. *And there was also a time when the*
 “ Clergy of this Nation was forbid to
 “ keep Hounds, *Accipitres & Falcones,*
 “ &c. And as concerning the mind of
 the Ancient Church in this particular,
 it is sufficiently apparent in those Ca-
 nons, which forbid the Clergy secular
 Sports and Recreations ; and all such
 Correspondencies, Entertainments, and
 Familiarities with the Laity, as were
 not the Product of their Office. And
 this was done not out of any supercili-
 ous moroseness to restrain, but out of a
 wary foresight to conciliate Reverence to
 the Clergy. To whose Profession they saw
 nothing was more contrary than too great
 indifferency of conversing with the peo-
 ple, whom they were to instruct. With
 whom they must not hope long to en-
 joy that Credit and Reverence (due
 to their Order,) which is founded upon
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the Gravity, Abstinence, Sobriety and Reservation of their Persons, if they license themselves that secular Freedom to which we now plead against. I have observed a Numerous Clergy *in the Roman, and not a few in our own Church*, though of no greater *Parts or Vertues* than others, to have secured to themselves a great share of Veneration, chiefly upon the account of a cautious Retreat from the Usages, and Liberties of the *Many*.

C H A P. XII.

A Survey of the pretences of the Contempt of the Clergy: Fourthly of Covetousness.

THE last Pretence for the Contempt of the Clergy, which we shall take notice of in this discourse, is their Covetousness. And this imputation usually ariseth from a prejudicate consideration of the Clergies carriage: First, in looking after the Incomes which are appointed for their Maintenance. Secondly in the frugal management of those Incomes.

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

Incomes. And lastly, in their seeking after Preferment.

And first, those who Contemn the Clergy for Covetousness, because they are diligent and careful to look after the things which are allotted for their subsistence, may manage the same Argument with as much Justice, though perhaps not with so much speciousness, against all those who are studious to reap the due fruits and benefits of their *Places*, and *Professions* ; though they have not (all things consider'd) so great an obligation for so doing, as the Clergy. Whom we must needs confess to be the *Stewards* of God's *Patrimony*, as well as of *his Mysteries*: and that in both it is required of them to be found faithful. To the discharge of which trust they will have but small reason to intitle themselves, unless they be exactly vigilant to preserve those dues, rights and profits which *the Laws of God* and the *Land*, have annexed to the Church, and not to suffer that to be cunningly embezel'd, unjustly defalcated, or *Alienated* which the *Bounty*, and Prety of Religious *Ancestors* devoted to the support and maintenance of the most *Holy Worship*. and preisthood that ever was in the world. But why should the Clergy be thought covetous because by just and amicable *Methods* they

they are diligent in the preservation of that wherewith they are intrusted; and that out of a due sense that the burden of Sacrilege is already too heavy upon the Nation, they labour to prevent its growing heavier, by saving men from that most execrable sin, from which none can be free, who endeavour to defraud the Church, and which not a few are ready to do, if not studiously prevented? Now, if this be the Case of the Clergies Covetousness in the first instance thereof, let it be left to him *That judgeth righteous judgment.*

Nor can they with any better colour brand, *As Covetous*, the Clergies wary and frugal management of their Incomes, so long as they are merciful to their power; and that their Alms are cheerful, and their Hospitality charitable; though they never meddle with those secular Entertainments, and expensive Correspondencies, to which the occasions of their *Office*, and expressions of *Charity* do neither oblige, nor invite them. And if the Clergy according to the best and Ancientest Canons, secure the interest of the poor in the goods of the Church, reserving unto themselves only such a portion thereof, as may suffice for *their own sober maintenance*, and to make honest provision for
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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

their Families, and not tenaciously to hoard them up for no better purposes than either to gratifie a covetous humour, or to furnish out a Worldly pomp and parade; or what is not much better, to enrich a Relation, that in the next Age, if not sooner, will Contemn his *Extraction*, and vilify the *Function*, by which he was raised. But on the contrary, if the Clergy are conscientiously careful not to dissipate the *Spiritual Patrimony* in any needless profusions, idle curiosities, *unclerical splendor*, or any thing disagreeable to that Christian Austerity, and *Rigor*, which is ever to be expected in that *Calling*: But shall with a *Religious providence*, and Charitable Frugality, endeavour so to husband that *Holy pittance*, whereof they are not the *Proprietaries*, but *Stewards*, as to be just, and Charitable; they ought upon these terms neither to be censured, nor despised as Covetous. Which is an imputation never to be fasten'd upon any *Who do justice, and love mercy*. And we must think that *Order of men* we speak of, to be wonderfully devoid of conscience and ingenuity, when they are guilty of any egregious failures in the things now mention'd. Especially when they shall

shall perceive them to be so equitable in themselves, so answerable to the nature of their *Calling*, and so strictly injoyn'd by the Laws of the Church, and so highly recommended by all the learned, and pious of their own Character and Profession.

As to the *Goods* of the Church, we know, they are frequently styled the *Goods* of the *Poor*; and the Ancient Church was so careful to maintain them in that state, that she allowed not a Bishop to bestow them upon their nearest Relations, further than to help them as they were indigent, lest they should be said to prey upon the Churches *Incomes*. I must take care (saith St. *Augustin*) lest the Estate of the Poor (which belongs to the Church of *Hippo*) be given to the *Rich*. In which matter I have hitherto quit my self well. For I have Kindred which call themselves *Noble*, who come to me being a Bishop (one while with Menaces, and another while with Flatteries) to to move me to confer something upon them because of our Relation, and yet through God's Grace I do not Remember, that I ever enriched any of them. Enough to this purpose is to be met with in the Canons concerning
Ecclesiastical

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

Ecclesiastical Discipline, and in those Authors who have writ *De Eccles. Repub.* I have been told that a late Bishop of this Nation in his Epistle to *Trinity-College* in *Cambridge*, (set before his *Mysteries of Christian Religion*) doth impute the late Sacrilege committed in this *Land* to the spending of Church-Means in an unchurch-like manner; and that this was done by the Clergies converting them to their private uses, or otherwise misemploying them. And there (saith he) God justly takes them away and permits Sacrilege; we our selves having first offended in the same kind. For certainly Church-means should have Relation as well to the use, as to the Persons; and a *Church-Man* in mis-spending them commits Sacrilege. And I find it likewise expressly affirm'd by a Divine of *Singular Learning* and *Piety* (in his *just Weights Measures*) that for any Degree or Order of the Clergy to increase their Estates out of *Church-goods*, was in the better and purer Times of Christianity, a thing which the Canons did not only prohibit, *but make void*. And that the Canons, from the Canon of the Apostles, to those at this Day in force in the Church of *Rome*, disable the Clergy to dispose of Church-goods by *Will* and Testament.

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In the 25th Session of the Council of Trent, and in the first Chapter concerning Reformation, among many other things very worthy of Remark, the *Synod* expressly forbids the Bishops to augment the Incomes of their Kindred, and Familiars with those of the Church: According to the Canons of the Apostles, prohibiting the Goods of the Church, which are God's, to be given to Relations; but if they are poor, to deal with them *as with the rest* of their Rank; and not to dissipate them for their sakes. *Imo quàm maximè potest, eos sancta Synodus monet, ut omnem humanum hunc erga fratres, Nepotes, propinquosque carnis affectum (unde multorum malorum in Ecclesia Seminarium extat) penitus deponant.* And what is said of the Bishops is also to be understood of the rest of the Clergy. 'Tis true where the Clergy (as in our own Church) have Liberty to marry, the Case seems to be *otherwise*; and the Church as she has given them leave to marry, must also give them leave even out of her own Revenues, to make provision for their Wives and Children. But this doth not abrogate, but only relax the Canons: And the married Clergy are herein to express a singular Moderation, and so to provide for Wife and Children

dren out of *Church-goods*, as not to extinguish the interest of the Poor therein. For I Humbly conceive that it is *no small mistake* in any Clergy-Man to imagine, that having out of the *Goods* of the *Church* soberly disposed of their Children in the World, they should also Labour to raise them Estates, and strive in their own Port to equal that of the higher Laity. With whom the Canons never intended them any other, or any more conversation than arose from the Tenor of their Function ; which requires that their chiefest Hospitality should respect the relief and support of the *Indigent* and *Necessitous* according to their power.

As to the last instance of Covetousness in the Clergy, which respects their eager hunting after Preferments, and Promotions in the Church, which the best and wisest have ever esteem'd a deplorable, and odious blemish in them, it surpasseth my abilities to indicate, and is against my conscience to excuse. And therefore I shall deeply lament, what I cannot redress; and humbly beseech Almighty God to restore those to a better mind, who herein are guilty. And that some are guilty in this particular, seems undeniable upon that general complaint made against that multiplicity of Church-preferments
wherewith

wherewith not a few are always furcharged *Ridente fanatico, nec dolente Papista*: Or rather indeed to the distress and injury of those Clergy-men, who would esteem it a good Vintage, to have but the gleanings of their *Brethren*; and think themselves will provided for, if they had but one of those *Numerous preferments* which are so unreasonably piled upon such, as are no more laborious in the *Word* and *Doctrine*, than others. But I shall forbear to enlarge, lest I should be mistaken in this particular; and only make it my humble *Supplication*, that the *Canons*, respecting the Clergy in this *Affair*, may impartially be considered by them; to the end, that their manifest opposition to this enormous practice, may through God, somewhat contribute to its Reformation; or at least so far open their eyes, as to let them see the utter inexpediency, if not unlawfulness of what cannot be justified, or hardly excused.

That which we call *Pluralities* in this Church, has long time been complain'd of as a Thorn in her side; which some of the *Reverend Fathers* the Bishops, have *very lately* been projecting to pull out. But in stead of the Extirpation of *Pluralities*, I could rather wish they were well prun'd; for till the abuse of them be retrench-

ed, and they be restored to their first design, they will scarce be capable of any conscientious Apology. And it is to be hoped that those corruptions which tract of time and negligence of some, may seem to have brought upon the first indulgence thereof, might for the future be prevented, if three or four obvious things were duly taken notice of. As,

First, That those unto whom the granting of Dispensations is committed, or who otherwise have any part in the disposal of such Preferments as appertain unto Learned Men, would bethink themselves what it is to respect any *thing either above or beside Merit*; considering how hard the World taketh it, when to men of commendable Note and Quality there is so little respect had, or so great unto them, whose deserts are very mean; that nothing seems more strange than the promotion of one sort, because they are not accounted of, and the neglect of other, because they are. "It being every man's expectation and hope in the Church of God, that the only purchase of greater rewards should be always greater deserts, and that nothing should be able to plant a *Thorn* where a *Vine* ought to grow.

Secondly,

Secondly, That Honorable Personages, and they who by vertue of any principal Office in the Common-wealth, are inabled to qualify a certain number, and to make them capable of Benefices and faculties above others, would not suffer their Privileges to be abused, contrary to the true intent and meaning of wholesom Laws, by men in whom there is nothing notable besides *Covetousness* and *Ambition*, too often also attended with *Ignorance* and *Idleness*.

Thirdly, That the Universities would bestow their Degrees not as meer kindnesses by way of *Civility*, but as Favours which always imply a Testimony given to the Church and Common-wealth, concerning mens sufficiency and merit for *Manners* and *Knowledge*. Considering that upon the credit of this Testimony sundry Statutes of the Realm are built, and that it is so far available that nothing is more respected for the Warrant of divers mens Abilities to serve both in *Church* and *State*. And if the Universities shall violate that *Religion* wherewith this Testimony ought to be given, they do not only disparage themselves, if it be known; but also involve those in error, who deem it a thing uncivil to call the Cre-

dit of their Testimony in question, by doubting either of the Manners or Abilities of those, upon whom they have confer'd their *Degrees*. And therefore are never to be granted to any one without due *Caution*, and *Advice*.

Fourthly, That the Indulgence of Pluralities be restored to its first design, by being allowed only to men of *Note*, to signify and reward Eminent Services done for the Church; and to encourage a more remarkable progress in Vertue and Science. *Ends* shamefully neglected in the present Indulgence of Pluralities, if we consider who they are who most bountifully enjoy them.

In the last place, it would not a little help to the removal of the scandalous abuses crept into the *Indulgence* of Pluralities, if those who are so forward to enjoy it, would remember what in *Duty* and *Conscience* towards God and the Church they are bound to perform. For they cannot be ignorant that those to whom Plurality of Church-preferments is granted, are bound to requite that *Grant* by an industry answerable to that Plurality, and that they are to excel as much in *Labour*, as in Dignity and Benefit. And therefore unless they faithfully answer the Churches expectation, in bending
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their labours to sow as well as reap, and to make their pains as far to exceed their Brethrens, as their Preferments and *Incomes*: In a word; unless they perform those Offices to which the very acceptance of plural Preferments and Benefices do formally bind, let them be well assured (*saieth my pious and learned Author*) that the Hony which they eat by fraud, shall turn in the end to Gall; and that which was nutriment in the mouth, shall prove gravel in the bowels. And though their subtil and colourable dealing here may not be taken notice of in the walk of humane justice, yet *He, the Sacred Image of whose Wisdom appears in the Laws of men*, will at last severely punish it. And now the only Apology that can be made for the Clergy in this concern, will be their own speedy endeavours to grow innocent; by avoiding all those things for the time to come, which may occasion offending. And using no Methods in the obtaining Church-benefices, but such as are just, ingenuous, and Canonical. And waving all those Privileges, *which*, contrary to the primitive Canons, give Leave to hold Church-preferments in more Dioceses than one; An abuse (as one has well observed)

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

brought in by the Papacy, when the See of Rome, seeking Benefices all over Christendom, granted Privileges to dissolve the Ancient Discipline, on purpose to enrich themselves and their Favorites.

But this which is now spoken, has no design to lay *Covetousness*, and therewith *Contempt*, at the door of any, who are studious first to *deserve*, and next to *obtain*, Plural Preferments upon the terms we have now mention'd: Nor yet to blame those, whom the scantiness of their present Fortunes move to seek for larger, on purpose to enable them to perform more singular services for God and the Church. But what has been said, respect those especially, who look not to be furnish't with such qualifications as are supposed by that Indulgence of the Law; which they so *hazardously* make use of, to their own *Spiritual danger*, *detriment of the deserving Clergy*, and *Reproach of the whole profession*, &c.

And though what hath been already suggested, may with unbyass'd Judgments, suffice to evince the falseness and iniquity of their carriage, who pretend Idleness, Pride and Covetousness in the Clergy, to be the reasons for which they are moved to Contemn them: Yet we
may

may safely suppose that those who are most active in bringing them into this Contempt, would be no otherwise, though they were as blameless therein, as the *Stars* and *Angels to which they are compared*; and in particular as innocent, as was once the man without a Navel. For where the Credit and Reverence of the Ministry is to be blasted, it is not what they are, but what Prejudice represents them to be. And besides all this, the *Contemners* know themselves herein to be safe; while they are not ignorant how the Fortitude of the Clergy is wholly passive, and that they are naked of all other Weapons but *Prayer* and *Patience*. And indeed what than Lowliness and Meekness can better become his Substitutes, who being reviled, reviled not again; and who enjoyn'd his disciples in general to recompence Evil with Good, and Cursing with Blessing? So that these Contemners finding themselves out of danger not only of Duel and Challenge, but also of *Recrimination* and *Reviling*, they heroically manage their Province of *Disgrace* and *Contempt*: whetting their Tongues, like a Sword, and then wounding therewith by Reproaches those who will ne-

ver answer them at that *Weapon*. And indeed these Contemnners, falling under the Clergies Christian consideration, will be found fitter Objects of their Pity than Anger; and more proper to be pray'd for than reproach't. And I doubt not but the Clergy do zealously pray for their *Contemnners*, as their Great Master did for his Crucifiers — *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

C H A P. XIII.

A Survey of some of the Real Grounds of the Contempt of the Clergy.

HAVING made this brief research into the more usual and troden pretences of the Contempt of our present Clergy, and found them to be but meer pretences, arising chiefly from Prejudice and *Mistake*; The next part of our Province is to enquire into such grounds of this Contempt, as seem more genuin and real. Not that I suppose any true reason can be render'd why the Clergy as such, should at all be contemn'd any more than

than God and Christ, who share with them in the Contempt: According to *St. Luke* 10. 16. &c. 1 *Thes.* 4. 8. But that the true grounds of this Contempt are not the Personal Lapses of the Clergy, as is pretended, but the *Nature*, and *Management* of their Function.

As to the Nature of their Function, it is well known to consist in turning Men from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God; and to teach all those, who profess Christianity, to deny all Ungodliness and Worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously and Godly all the time of their being here on Earth. And as to the management of those things wherein the Nature of the Ministry consists, it ought to be zealous and impartial; for as the Clergy are the Stewards of the Divine Mysteries, they are by that Title obliged to be *faithful*, which they cannot pretend to be, should they cry peace, peace, to those whom they see in open Hostility against the *Prince of Peace*. But their Carriage must be like *Balaam's*, whom though a false Prophet, a houseful of Gold and Silver could not have hired to go one step beyond the Command of the Lord.

Now

Now when the present Clergy shall pursue the Duties of their *Calling* with that Integrity and Faithfulness which God requires at their Hands, ill-governed Men usually deal with them, as *Ahab* did with the Prophet, who with a Boldness and Fidelity becoming a Prophet, and a Subject, foretold the great Disasters should befall him for his wicked Conversation. We Read of *Herod's* listening to the austere Baptist (and of the many good things he did at his Exhortation) and how he had him in no small Veneration, till he told him of his incestuous Association with his Brothers Wife. And *St. Paul* met with no interruption in his Discourse, till he came to a close reasoning of *Continence* before him, who lived in unlawful *Concubinage*. And long before this too, we find a Friendly and Pious Advice turned to the Reproach of him that gave it. As in the case of *Lot*, whom the filthy *Sodomites* accused of Arrogance because he meekly advised them to desist from that more than brutal Violence and Impurity, which they designed against his Angel-Guests. And it was the malicious Supposal of the *Jews*, that if respect was given to Christ's Person, it would so credit his Doctrine, that all would be in danger to believe it ;

it; and to prevent this, they sought to beat down his Reputation by calling him *Drunkard, Glutton, Mad-man, and Deceiver of the People.* And so unreasonable are Governing Lusts, and so charmed therewith are Men's Hearts, that those who by the Powerful Countercharm of God's Word are willing to disinchant them, are no better treated than Christ by the *Demoniack, who, when* he came to cure, cried out, that he was come to torment him.

The Written like the Essential Word of God is quick and powerful (Vital and Operative) piercing even to the dividing of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joynts and Marrow, and able to discern the Thoughts and Intentions of the Heart. And when by this its Ministers rip up those Secret Corruptions, in whose Concealment and Fruition so many seem to have placed their Heaven and Felicity, it will be easy to foretel what great respect they are like to meet with, especially in an Age, in which most Offenders are of the same Humour with those *Beaux Esprits, or Virtuosi in Cicero, who were not vexed that they offended, but took it very hainously to be told thereof.* And when again by the same Gospel, which is a *light that makes all manifest,*
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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

the Clergy discover to the Consciences of the Wicked the Shame and Nakedness of their Vices; not being able to endure the Tortures naturally arising from such a Detection, nor to deny the Truth thereof, nor yet daring openly to Blaspheme the Instrument of the same Detection; their only refuge is to lessen both the Efficacy and Credit of the Gospel, by lessening the esteem of those who preach it: But too rightly apprehending that God's Word, and his Ministers are such near *Allies*, that the disrepute of the one falls upon the other.

Now, when the Clergy (according to their Duty) go about to cut the wings of *Pride*, or quench the Flames of Lust; to decry those sinful Courses, which corrupt Nature most magnifies, and to propagate those Vertues to which these Contemners have the greatest Antipathy and Averseness: When (in a word) the Clergy zealously recommend to our most Cordial Practice those very Duties, which we most dislike, they cannot hope by this way to procure any great esteem with those against whose Vices they thus directly set themselves. But on the contrary, they are to expect to be looked upon as the greatest Enemies by all such, to whom they *thus tell*
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the truth. And indeed it has ever been the Policy of the Malicious to lessen their Credit whose service they would render insuccessful, and to make Men have mean thoughts of all those, who interrupt them in their Vices. But without driving this particular any further, it is undeniably evident to the World, that one main cause of the Clergies Contempt may be resolved into that Apology Christ upon the same occasion made for himself, *viz. The World hateth me, because I testifie that the Works thereof are evil.*

Nor doth that part of the Priestly Function, consisting in the instruction of all Men in their respective Duties, occasion some of them more obloquy, than the Execution of the Sacred Discipline doth others. For this latter having a direct aim and tendency to suppress our darling Sins, and to put us to shame for their Commission; we labour to beat it down with the same Engine, that those *Conspirators* in *Numb. 16th* used against the Priesthood, namely, as a thing useless and unnecessary: They indeed did so, upon the pretence of their own Sanctity; but we do it out of Pride, Contumacy, and Stubborness.

I know alas! the *Power of the Keys*, Excommunication, or Church-Censures,
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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

are become very contemptible, and sunk so low in some Men's Opinion, that they fear them no more than Artificial Fire or meer noisy Thunder. But yet in their Original Institution and Primitive Practice nothing was more high and dreadful, and it was look'd upon as a great Mercy in God, and a singular Honour for the Clergy, to confer upon them *no less a Power than* to deliver obstinate sinners over unto the Power of Satan, and by a previous Judgment to his to Sentence them to the Everlasting Pains of Hell: And likewise, a Power to release penitent Souls from the Chains of Darknes, and Bondage of the Devil, and to restore them to the Glorious Liberty of the Sons of God; whereby they are made *Heirs* of the Kingdom of Heaven. And yet this Power, whereof Angels would be ambitious, Christ confer'd upon the Clergy, when he said unto his Apostles, *Whose soever Sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whose soever Sins ye retain they are retained.* And as these Words give a Power of Publick exclusion out of the Church for *Scandalous Enormities*, and re-admission into it upon *Repentance*, it undoubtedly belongs to the Governors of the Church, as distinguished from the People

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

III

as is Evident from the first Collation of it in St. *John* 20. 22. And the Exercise of these Censures is so much the work of Church-Governors, that St. *Paul* calls them the Weapons of their Spiritual Warfare, by which they cast down imaginations and every high thing, that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bring into Captivity every thought to the Obedience of Christ, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. And this *Power* in the first Exercise of it was attended with signal *Severities*, such as this Age will hardly be induced to believe; and that too when there was no Temporal *Sword* to assist these *Spiritual Weapons*. But it is not easie to advise what ought to be done in such a State of the Church as ours is, wherein the Enormities of some give them a sort of impunity, who having separated themselves from the Church, are also in their own esteem at least, got out of the Power of its Censures. And as to many of those, who stay within the Church, through a long forbearance of this Rod, they are grown too *Heady* to be brought under Correction. And both Principles of *Latitude*, and a long *Uncorrected Wickedness* are ready to dispute all Ecclesiastical Restraints, and
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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

would rather have no Church at all, than one with *Censures*. But as this doth no way evacuate the *Power*, so neither should it hinder the Exercise of it, but it ought rather to be the more vigorously asserted, because thus unjustly gainsaid. However it will not become such as are chiefly concern'd in the management of the Church-censures, by a luke-warm Execution thereof to suffer them to be looked upon as meer *Bruta fulmina*, and not such proper Remedies to cure the Scandals of Christianity, as they are pretended to be. And if Religion could but get such countenance us by a prudent, and Impartial management of Church-Censures, to strike the open Sinners with fear of being turn'd out of *Christian Company*, and to be avoided as unfit for Conversation; if not Conscience yet *Reputation* would in a great measure restrain them. Not to be thought *Fit Company* for *Christians*, would surely make them shun their Vices; and very *Shame*, one designed effect of the Censures, would prevail upon these, by whom, nobler Motives are Contemn'd. We need not be told how the Censures of the Church were *not only laid aside* in the *Vastations* of the Arian Heresie and Persecution; and before that in *Dioclesians* days, against the *Lapsi*: But we find that things were

were come to that extremity in one Church of *St. Paul's* planting that he was reduced to his (ὅφελον καὶ ἀποκοψόνταί) *I would they were even cut off that trouble you*, Gal. 5. 12. The Offenders were grown so Numerous and Obstinate, that they seemed too Mighty for him: So that he was only able to *Excommunicate* the guilty in a *Wish*, and cut them off in *Desire*. And much of the same distemper seems to be spread though our own Age; for though the necessity of the times, interest of Religion, and welfare of the Church, loudly call for the severities of *Discipline*; yet there appear no small Discouragements against it, whether we consider the Popularity of Vices, or the Power and Greatness of the Vicious: Especially when we see that they whose *Lives* and *Judgments* are chiefly to be cured with the Censures, have either had the Reins so long upon their Necks, that they are grown too Head-strong for *Discipline*; or they have adopted such *Principles*, as make them Scorn, and despise it, and so cause them to withstand both Christ and his Church. And in this profligate State of Affairs, chiefly occasion'd by the late and long overthrow of Government and *Discipline*, it

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

is no easie matter for Church-Rulers to proceed. However we ought to be so far from Contemning them upon this score, that it is our bounden Duty humbly to bow our Knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would direct and strengthen the *Reverend Fathers of Our Church*, that they may support and keep up the small remainder of that Ecclesiastick Discipline, which *Schism*, *Atheism* and *Profaneness*, have not yet quite trampled under Foot. And that by their paternal Endeavours the whole Discipline may in some good measure be restored to its primitive Efficacy and Credit, and so be able to accomplish the Ends for which it was at first designed.

C H A P. XIV.

A further Examination of the Grounds of the Contempt of the Clergy, respecting their Condition in the World, and Extraction.

ANother occasion of the Clergies Contempt may be imputed to the indiscreet Measuring of their Credit according to their outward Fortunes, which generally being but small, their Veneration is proportionate. For men deal herein with the Ministers of the Gospel, as the scoffing *Jews* dealt with its *Blessed* Author, when they judged of him according to secular Circumstances, and weighed him in the false Ballance of the World. *Is not this the Carpenters Son? And they were offended at him.* Their Probe pierced no deeper than the Skin, and their judgment of Christ being only according to the outward appearance of his Person, it could not be Righteous, They saw the *Messias* to be destitute of external *Royalty* and *Grandeur*; that his Administration was not *Lordly* or
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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

attended with state but Humble and perswasive; and his Carriage not *Big* and *Haughty*, but *Meek* and *Lowly*; and that he wanted that exterior Splendid appearance wherein they expected him: And which the blind world doth still esteem only worthy Admiration and Regard. And it was upon these terms that they rejected the *Lord of Life*, and preferred one who Murdered, before one who came to Save them. And the condition of present Circumstances makes the parallel exact. For we find the same Objections brought by some to Vilify the Clergy, which were urged against Christ. *viz.* Meanness of parentage, and estate, which some delight to object against the Clergy with the utmost malice, and Contempt. But as to this there needs no Apology, for the Clergy, while there are other things which Enoble besides *Family*. For among wise Persons *Learning* was ever thought a sufficient Title to Nobles, and Secular Eminence. And *A. Gellius* affirms, that not only excellency of Extraction and great Fortunes, but also *Learning* makes *Noble*. For coming (saith he) to visit *Fronto Cornelius*, as he was lying sick of the Gout, I found him lying upon his *Scimpodium Graciense, circum-*
undique

undique sedentibus multis Doctrina, aut Genere, aut Fortuna Nobilibus viris. And the Lawyers affirm expressly, that if a *Legacy* be given *Pauperi Nobili*, the *Executors* may give it to a Doctor. And the respect given to Letters, hath occasion'd the dispute for Precedency between Knights and Doctors of the Law, as may appear both by the Comparison that *Tully* maketh betwixt *Lucius Murena* a Knight of *Rome*, and *Pub. Sulpitius* a Lawyer (each of them standing for the Consulship) in his Eloquent Oration for *Murena*, and many other Disputes arguing the Case *to* and *fro*. And in foreign Countries where the Civil Law is in Credit, it is still disputable; though this precedence is not so Dubitable among us, where the professors of the Civil Law are shut up (said Doctor *Ridley*) into a narrow corner of their *Profession*. I produce this, only to show that *Learning* and the degrees of the Schools (which are still supposed to be in the Clergy) have ever been thought as fair Titles to the advantage of *Secular Opinion* and *Honour*, as any other. But as for such as would lessen the Priesthood for the meanness of their *Descent* who bear it, they would do well to

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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

consider, that the Laws of the Land render a *Fils des prestres*, or Baseborn, *uncapable of that Sacred Office*, unless by the interposition of the Royal Prerogative. And that in the Ancient qualifications of those who were to be admitted to Holy Orders, all Bondmen, Accomptants, and Men distorted or deform'd in Body, as also *Bigamists*, were excluded. But never mean extraction, as appears from *Can. Apost. LXXXII.* and *Can. XXXIII. Conc. Sext. Trull.* Next, that in all Orders of Men it is the *Office*, Authority and Calling, that are chiefly to be looked upon. In respect of all which the Clergy are undeniably as considerable as any Rank of Men whatsoever. And lastly, that *Learning* and *Manners*, are chiefly required for admission into Holy Orders. It is true, that eminence of *Birth* gives no small Lustre to the Clergy, and when *Persons of Quality* enter upon the Priesthood, they become as greater Stars, which Brighten up the *less*. And though Birth and *Descent*, &c. be inconsiderable in respect of God, yet *Vertue*, Learning and Religion are rendred more Illustrious when therewith accompanied. And though likewise the Sacerdotal Office be in it self, and alone, sufficient to give Credit and

and Repute to the lowest Descent of Men, who duly undertake and discharge it: Yet it is no little Honour and Felicity for the Church, not only to have Kings for her Nurfing-Fathers, but *also* Nobles for her Priests. But yet still none are either *too High* or *too Low* for Holy Orders, whose *Graces* and *Abilities* qualify to undertake *them*. And albeit those are more to be Honor'd, who besides *Vertue* and *Learning* bring into the Clergy Eminence of Parentage, yet those are not to be contemn'd who come without it. There being enough in the very Nature and Original of the *Office*, to procure them respect and reverence who bear it. Whom according in *St. Paul*, we are to esteem very highly to Love for *their works sake*: Or, to pay them all possible respect for the Pains that they take amonst us. 1 *Thef.* 4. 12, 13.

But if to what has been already spoken, all the real grounds of this *Contempt* be not reducible; then what is wanting may be too justly resolved into the decay of Reverence to Religion and Obedience to God. And now it is not *Vertue*, *Piety*, *Learning*, *Industry*, *Justice*, *Liberality*, nor all that can be imagin'd to fit the Clergy for respect, that can procure it them with those

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

who have thrown off all *Loyalty to God* and *Reverence to Religion*. Against whom it is in vain otherwise to Apologize, than with *Tears*, and *Prayers*.

But there are yet two things more, which (in regard of present Circumstances) are accessory to the Contempt we speak of. The first is the carriage of *Dissenting Teachers*, who by ungentle Arts labour to lessen the Esteem, and therewith the Serviceableness of the *Universities*, and Orthodox, Clergy. Who contrary to their Pretences of greater Conscientiousness, blow into the Heads of their *Unwary Sectaries*, that all but themselves are a Ministry so Monstrous as would affright you to mention. And indeed the infusing their Profelytes with spiteful and uncharitable Prejudices against the Regular Clergy is one main Engine wherewith they so closely insinuate themselves into *Their Affections*, with whom the strength of their own Credit chiefly consists in weakening that of the ministers of the Church. The guilt and injustice of which Carriage is so open to the *World*; that there is no need further to Animadvert upon it. And though methinks better things might be expected from Men, who pretend to make such Conscience
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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

121

of *Their Wayes*; yet I could wish that only Dissenters were herein to be faulted: And that *among the Conforming Clergy themselves*, none were to be met with, to encrease the cry, and speak evil of the things they understand not. Which certainly is their unhappiness who either by their own Opinions, or by squint Reflections upon those of others, occasion many to grow Jealous that all the *Conforming Clergy* are not so Orthodox, as we believe. Which Carriage is so foully detogatory to this Sacred. Rule they profess, and so greatly tending to the contempt of their order, and therefore so unpolitick as well as Uncharistian, that its strange any Priest should be guilty of it, who is either truly *Pious* or *Considerate*. And if any who reading this Intimation, by reason of their own Conscioufness shall take it to themselves, I humbly pray God it may turn to their amendment.

Another sort of Men, who egregiously promote this Contempt, are the Roman Missionaries, who though not so solicitous as the former to bespatter the Persons of our Clergy, yet what is more for their purpose, they labour to make void their Orders (and thereby their whole Service) by instilling into their
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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

ease Profelytes a belief, That ever since our departure from *Rome*, we have been without an *Ephod*. and without *Teraphim* : All Priesthood properly so called. And though this perhaps may neither be practised upon *Vulgar Persons*, nor at all come within their Cognizance, yet it is more than probable that they deal and succeed herein with those, who are able to bring most damage to our Church, and advantage to their own.

And thus having with that plainness and brevity, which was at first design'd, given you an Essay both of the *Real* and *Pretended Grounds* of the Contempt of the Clergy ; I have as it were only described the *Disease*, so that it should be our next Task to prescribe somethings in order to its Cure. And though according to present Circumstances, this may seem to passe for next to impossible ; yet it is to be hop'd that it would not a little contribute to mitigate and allay the Fury of the *Distemper*, if both *Laity* and Clergy would seriously lay to heart what has, I hope, with *Modesty* and *Conscience*, *Truth* and *Integrtly* been already mention'd. And what I have now to speak more upon this *Unwelcome Subject*,

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

123

ject, shall be by way of a very *short Address* unto three sorts of Persons, who are herein more especially concern'd.

And my first address shall be to the Magistrate, that he would not suffer the Clergy to be condemn'd, if not for the sake of their Function, yet for the *Peace and Safety* of the *State*. For if upon an Atheistical supposal it should be granted, That Religion is but a meer Engine of Government, or a Politick Invention, devised to awe the People into Subjection and Obedience, and thereby very proper to turn the affairs of the World: *Yet that Religion may be able to effect these purposes*, there is a necessity of distinct Persons to instil into the People a belief and fear of the *Invisible Powers*, and this dismal apprehension of a future State, or the World to come. And to show them how that these invisible Powers have decreed and appointed that all sorts of Persons should be subject to the visible higher Powers upon Earth; and how that they will certainly and fearfully punish all such as do otherwise. So that it now becomes the interest of the Magistrate to assert the Credit and Authority of those, upon whose Ministry

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

Ministry so much of the common Welfare depends. And to take care that Persons thus imployed, have such a Veneration and Regard shown them, as may render them competent to perform these good Offices for the State. If the honoring of Religion brings *Greatness*, and the vilifying thereof Ruin, to a Nation; and that Religion cannot be honor'd, where its Ministers are despised: Then let those who bear any tolerable *Goodwill* unto the Land of their Nativity, take heed of making but a Mock of that Carriage, which may prove no less fatal to its Happiness, than it did to the *Jews*; in whom God punished the Abuse of his Messengers with the *Desolation* of their Temple, and *irreversible Dispersion* of their whole *Nation*.

When Princes granted to Clergy-Men Authority to hold *Consistories*, it was because they thought it uncomly for them to follow matters of Suits abroad, to the great distraction of their Prayer and Exercise of Divine Service. As also; that they might have a more speedy and better dispatch before a Judge of their own Learning, than before a Judge of another Profession. And that their Suits and Quarrels should not be divulged and spread abroad among the Lay-people,

ple, to the great Discredit of their whole Calling. And we read that in Criminal Matters, Princes anciently so much tender'd the Clergy, that if any Man among them had Committed any thing worthy of Death or open Shame, he was not Executed or put to publick Disgrace, *before he was Degraded by the Bishop, and his Clergy*; and so was Executed, and put to Shame, not as a Clerk, but as a Lay-Malefactor. Which respect towards Ecclesiastical Men, 'twere well it were still retain'd, both because (*saith a Great Civilian*) the Consideration thereof is reverent and worthy the Dignity of the Ministry, whose Office is most Honorable; and also for that it is more Ancient than any *Papistical Immunity*; and let me add also, because it highly tends to the Honour and Advancement of Religion, and consequently to the strength and safety of the Common-wealth.

And though instead of bearing any such Reverence to God's Ministers, the present Age seems to reckon it among its *Wonderful Accomplishments* to condemn *Them*; yet if ever the sad Effects thereof fall under the mature and serious Consideration of the Magistrate, I doubt not but the sense of his own and
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A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

the Publick Safety, will awaken his Endeavours to set Shores to that Inundation of Miseries, which from an uncontrolled Vilifying of the Officers of Religion will naturally flow, and unavoidably break in upon, and deluge the *Land*.

My next Address is to the *Contemners themselves*: Whom I would heartily request to Consider, how their Vilifying the Clergy, is contrary to the general Practice of the World: There being no Nation so utterly Savage and Uncivilized, whose respect to their Priests doth not rather incline to excess, than *Defect*. Next I would Humbly Beseech them to revolve how their Carriage herein is wholly Opposit to that Common Equity, which obligeth us to yield *All* respect agreeable to the Estimate the *Laws* of the *Place* have put upon the *Office* they bear. And here I cannot but likewise Suggest who those are, whom they Contemn; how that in every *Spermologus*, or idle, babling, talkative Clergy-Man, (for so the *Wits* of *Athens* called *St. Paul*) *there is an Ambassador of Christ*. 2 Cor. 5. 20. And all know an Ambassador sustains his Princes Person, and negotiates his Affairs. And that the King is said, in our usual

usual Discourse, to do that, that his Ambassador doth in his Name. And the Respect or Affront done to an Ambassador, interpretatively is done to the *Person*, whom he Represents. Which is all applicable to the Ambassadors of Christ, for what *They* do, *He* is said to do; and the Dishonour done to them, God takes as done to Himself (1 Sam. 8. 7. *They have not Rejected you, but they have Rejected me*) and our Saviour told his Disciples, when He Commission'd them to Preach in his Name, *He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me*, Mat. 10. 40. *He therefore that despiseth them, despiseth not Men, but God.* 1 Thes. 4. 8. According to that usual saying among the Jews, *Every Mans Messenger is as himself.* And give me leave to tell you (who are the Contemners of Christ's Ambassadors) that they are *more deserving of your Respect than Those of Earthly Princes*, as representing a Master, whose Power and Greatness, as much excel that of Secular Kings, as God doth all the Sons of Men. *For they are the Ambassadors of the Lord of Hosts.* Mal. 2. 7.

They are likewise intrusted with greater Secrets than those of State, even with the Great Mystery of Godliness, God manifest

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

in the Flesh, which had been hid from all Ages, and which the Angels desired to look into. They likewise were not, as other Ambassadors are, sent to particular Nations, and upon particular Concerns; but unto all the *World*: And upon a Message of no less Importance than to make up the grand Breach, and to Reconcile God and Man. And we may still observe that they have no other Design upon us, than to open our Eyes, and to turn us from *Darkness to Light*, and from the *Power of Satan to God*. That we may receive *Forgiveness of Sins*, and *Inheritance among them that are Sanctified by Faith, that is in Christ*. And seeing that this is the undoubted Tenour of the Commission they receive for their Ambassy, and that they Negotiate nothing but the Welfare and Happiness even of their *Contemners*, which one would hope might move them to retract their Contempt upon the sole account of its *Injustice and Disingenuity*. For what can more deservedly bear that Imputation, than to deal ill with those, who wish us no worse than to be Eternally Happy: And who with the same Devotion and Integrity endeavour our *Salvation* as they do their own? Indeed if they went about to A-
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bridge us of any *Honest* Comfort or Delight ; or of what is either agreeable to our *Rational* Nature, or soberly conducing to Healthful and Comfortable Life : If they Instructed us to cast our Wealth into the Sea, when there are other ways enough to save us from being drown'd : If they forbid us any thing but what will do us Hurt ; or enjoyn'd us any thing but the Practise of those Vertues which have ever been justly accounted the best *Tryals* and *Exercises* of *Brave* and *Generous* Spirits ; and fittest to keep Men from *Sinking* into *Bruits* : Then we might have some Colour to Invert the Scripture, and to revile them for their *Works sake*. But being clearly Ascertain'd of the contrary ; and that they manage their Office according to its genuine Design, *namely*, to save their own Souls, and the Souls of them that hear them : We cannot without the Privilege of *Lunacy*, and Scandal of *Ingratitude*, either Expose their Persons, or Vilify their Function. As for mine own part, it has ever hitherto exercised my Wonder, that Men should run so far Counter both to God and themselves, as to Despise those whom God will Honour ; and Undervalue those who are

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

so serviceable to them in their highest Concern, and principal Interest.

But leaving these Men to cure this their distemper'd Carriage towards the Clergy, with a considerate Reflection upon the baseness and ungentility of so doing; I will conclude these *Tumultuary Papers*, with a short Application to those Reverend Persons, to the Vindication of whose *Honour* they are really intended.

And here I would not be thought to be one of those who are *Wiser* than their Teachers; an Imputation not possibly to be avoided, if I should go about to instruct them. My purpose therefore is in this place to perform the Office of an humble Remembrancer; and to mind those Reverend Persons, (to whom in all Submission I make this Address) as far as possible, and it in them lyes, to give no occasion to their *Enemies to speak evil of them*. And though I know you have no Locks upon their Hearts, nor Bits in their Mouths, but that their Thoughts are free, and their Tongues are their own; yet you want not ways conducing to their *Restraint*, and to silence the Obloquy of such unreasonable Men: *Namely,*

First,

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

131

First, A prudent Care that no Egregious Misgovernment of your Persons render your Calling less acceptable; but labouring that in all things your *Holy Office* may be adorn'd with an answerable Conversation. For it is the well governing of our selves that will Embolden you in the Reproof of others Miscarriages, and give Authority to your Doctrine. And by doing the same things you Teach, you shall give an undeniable Attestation that they are not so difficult in themselves, nor humane Nature so far weakned and depressed, but that all the Duties of Christianity may be performed. But if like Mercurial Statues, you never move a Foot toward the place to which you direct others; this may create in the *Laitie* a sturdy Suspicion, that the whole matter is but a Holy Cheat. Let your own Breasts then be the first *Profelytes* of your Doctrine; and let your Ministry first manifest its Power in making your selves good. *Non aliter viventes quàm vivendum precipientes*: Which was neglected by those Philosophers, who (saith *Seneca*) deserved so ill of Mankind. Always remembring how ill it becomes Divines to be like those Philosophers in *Epictetus*, who were "Ανευ τῶ

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πραττειν,

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

περίττειν, μέχει τὸ λέγειν, *Factis procul, Verbis Tenuis*; as *A. Gellius* makes the Remark. *Lib. 17. Chap. 19.*

Chaucer in the Prologue, to his *Canterbury Tales*, gives the Character of a Religious and Learned Priest. Which being not wholly Impertinent to that we speak of, I have here inserted in his own Language and Metre.

The Parson.

A good manne there was of Kelt-
gioun,
And was a poore Parson of a Toun;
But rich he was of holy thought and
werke,
He was eke a learned manne and a
Clerke,
That Christes Gospels truly would
preach;
His Parishners devoutly would he
teach.
Benigne he was and wonder di-
ligent,
And in adberstitie full patient;
And soch a one he was probed oft
sithes,
Full loth [were him to curse for his
tithes;

But

But rather would he yeven out of
doubt

unto his pooze Parishners all a-
bout,

Both of his offering and of his Sub-
stance;

He couthe in little thing have suffi-
saunce.

Wilde was his Parish and Houses fer
asonder,

But he ne left netther for raine ne
thonder,

In sicknesse ne in mischiefe for to vi-
site,

The ferdest in his Parish, moch or
lite,

Upon his feete, and in his hand a
stake :

This noble example to his shepe he
pase,

That first he wrought, and after-
ward taught,

Out of the Gospel he the words
caught,

And this figure he added eke thereto,

That if Gold rust, what should Iron do?

For yef a Priest be foul, on whom
we trust,

No wonder is a † leude man to rust ; † i. e.
And shame it is, if a Priest take A Lay-
kepe, man.

To se a bitten shepperd, and a
clean shepe :

Well ought a prest, ensample for to
geve

By his cleannesse, how his shepe
should liue.

He set not his Benefice to hire,
And let his shepe a comber in the
mire,

And renne to London, to Saint
Poules,

To seeken him a Chauntrie for
soules :

Or with a Brotherhede to be with-
old :

But keep at home and kept well
his fold,

So that the wolfe made him not
miscarry,

He was a shepherd and not merce-
nary.

And though he holy were, and ver-
tuous,

He was not to sinful men despi-
tous,

He of his speech dangerous ne
digne,

But in his teaching discrete and be-
nigne,

To drawne folk to heaben, with
fairnesse,

By

By good ensample, this was his be-
sinesse.

But he were any persone obstinate,
Whether he were of high or low es-
tate,

Him would he snibbe sharply for the
Nonis,

A better Priest I know no where
non is.

He wayted after no pompe ne rever-
ence,

He maketh him no spiced Conscience;
But Christes lore, and his Apostles
twelve,

He taught, but first he followed it
himselbe.

And though the excellent *Chaucer*,
as appears by his writings, met not
with many of this Character; yet the
History of those Times represents the
Religiousness of the Clergy (*especially the
Regular*) and the peoples Reverence
towards them to have been highly com-
mendable. And that the Clergy serv-
ed God in continual prayer, watching,
fasting, and preaching the word of
life; despising the Commodities of the
World, as things that were none of their
own; being content with so much there-

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

of as might serve their necessities ; living themselves according to what they taught others. For which the people had them in a marvellous Reverence, freely imparting to them of the chief of their Substance. And in so doing conform'd to the primitive Rule and Practice of Christianity.

It was St. *Paul's* Exhortation to *Timothy*, that he *Should take heed to himself and to his Doctrine* : And the former advice seems to have been equally necessary and important with the latter. For the loose and ill-govern'd Life of a Divine doth usually more hurt, than his Preaching doth good : There being nothing doth more effectually imprint the *Lessons* of Holiness and Vertue upon the people, than the exemplary Conversation of their Teachers : The later having ever had a greater force upon *The, Many* than the Former. And indeed it was the signal care of the Apostles *To live as they preached*, that at first made Christian Religion so successful and prevailing in the World. And none could reasonably doubt of the Truth of that Doctrine, and necessity of these duties, in whose conscientious belief and performance, the Preachers thereof were such *Fair Examples*. Remember what Christ said to
your

your Holy Predecessors, when he was training them up for the Ministry : “ *Ye are the Salt of the Earth* ; but if the Salt hath lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted ? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under Foot of Men. *Mat. 5. 13.*

The position of the *Syriack* Scholiast translated out of the *Syriack* Language by *D. L.* hath these words upon *Levit.*

4. 3. “ If the Priest that is anointed, &c. In the *Greek*, if the high-Priest, he who is anointed, shall sin, *so as to make the people to sin (i. e.)* they imitating him, and offending in the same kind, the whole Congregation shall offer an Oblation, a young Bullock for his sin. *i. e.* All the people when they offend offer the same Oblation only, which the Priest did when he offended. And therefore it is said, that the transgression of him who standeth in an high place, ought to be reputed, as if it were the sin of all those who stand under him.

“ And if a Ruler shall sin, his Oblation is less than that of the Priest, or that of the Congregation all together : Nor was he sprinkled with Blood seven times, by reason of his Prerogative

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

“ tive of Honour ; and though in some
 “ respects the Prince himself be less than
 “ the Priest, and the people do far ex-
 “ ceed him in Number ; yet he is greater
 “ than any one of the Congregation,
 “ and therefore every one of them of-
 “ fending offereth a *Female*, but he a
 “ *Male-kid*, *Levit.* 4. 22, 23, 24.
 The design of inserting this position
 will not need to incur the mark of
Impertinency, when it is considered to
 whom upon this occasion it is address-
 fed.

And as that which I have now rudely
 suggested, will prove one infallible me-
 thod to secure your Esteem ; so it will
 likewise furnish you with courage in the
 discharge of your Function. For no-
 thing doth so much animate the reproof
 of anothers faults, as a *Nil conscire* in
 the Reprover. And seeing it is your
 unhappiness to live in an Age, wherein
 Vice is arrived at that *Assurance* and
 Power, that it may seem no small piece
 of Valour to be Vertuous your selves,
 or to Counsel others to be so ; there ap-
 pears all imaginable reason that courage
 draws you out to assault and batter the
 strong holds of sin, and to conflict wick-
 edness in High Places. And when your
 Courage

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

139

Courage is the Child of your own Innocency, it will infuse a marvellous vigor and spirit into every Branch of your Office, *So that you may speak and exhort, and rebuke with all Authority.* And present Circumstances being duly weighed, your Case will plainly appear to resemble that of *Ezekiels*, when God said unto him, *Ezek. 2. 6.*

Son of Man, be not afraid of them, *neither be afraid of their words*, though Briars and Thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among Scorpions, be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be *Rebellious, &c.*

Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their forehead, *&c. Chap. 3. 8, &c.*

And give me leave to shut up all with commending to your Consideration, the sharp and known invective of that excellent Heathen against the vicious Philosophers, in the second Book of his *Tusculan Questions*. *Quotas quisque Philosophorum invenitur, qui sit ita moratus, &c. Artemque Vitæ professus delinquit in vita, &c.* He is like a professed *Grammarian* speaking barbarously,

A Modest Plea for the Clergy.

barbarously, or a scurvey Singer vaunting of his skill in Musick. Nothing being more absurd and ridiculous than to be defective in the knowledge of that in which a Man professeth himself to be a *Master, &c.*

Ad majorem Dei Gloriam.

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